HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ARMENIA

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HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ARMENIA

BY

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SUMMER SESSION

WITH INTRODUCTIONS BY

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RT. REV. BISHOP KAREKIN

PRELATE OF THE ARMENIANS IN CALIFORNIA

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Dedicated to my wife
Lucy Sarafian

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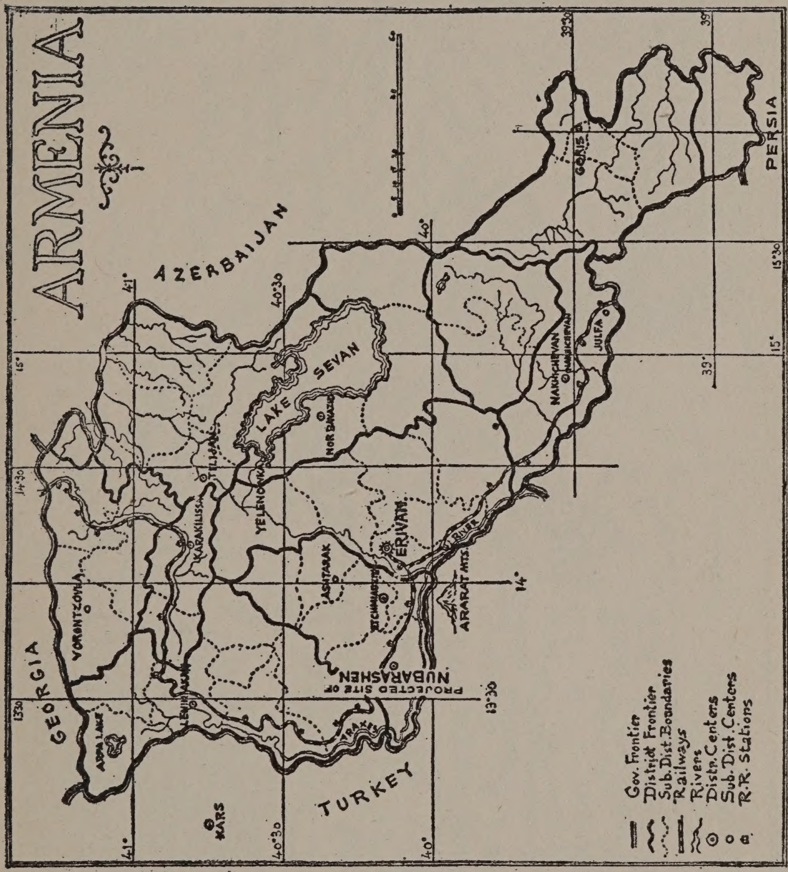
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YELENOVKA
NOR BAYAZET
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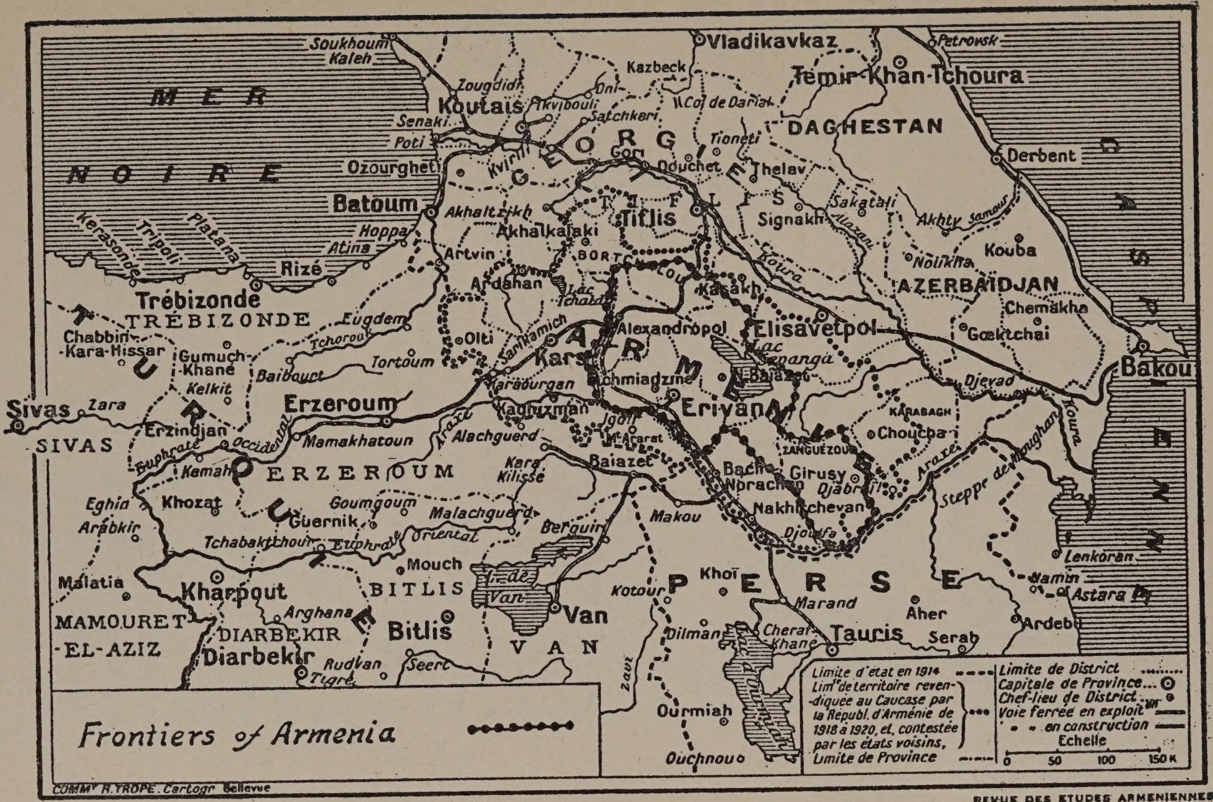
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Serab
Marand
Tauris
Cherat-Khané
Lac d'Ourmiah
Khoï
Dilman
Ourmiah
Ouchnou
Zavi
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Limite de territoire revendiquée au Caucase par la Républ. d'Arménie de 1918 à 1920, et contestée par les états voisins,
Limite de Province
Limite de District
Capitale de Province
Chef-lieu de District
Voie ferrée en exploit.
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COMMT H. TROPE. Cartogr Bellevue

REVUE DES ETUDES ARMENIENNES

INTRODUCTION

During the past few years, educators have been making numerous and often times extended statistical and experimental investigation of schoolroom problems. Such investigations are of great value in the realm of school administration and finance and in determining the relative achievements through the use of different materials and procedures. They are inadequate however, in determining what should be accomplished or the worth of what has been accomplished. Judgments regarding these significant phases of education must be based on a much more comprehensive experience than can be included in any statistical or experimental study. As a result there is a growing feeling of need on the part of men who are devoting their time and energy to applied fields of education, as well as on the part of those who are primarily interested in principles of philosophy of education, for a more thorough understanding of the fundamentals and for a perspective that will serve as a guide and make more significant the work they are doing.

Dr. Sarafian, in his "History of Education in Armenia" leads us, through the use of new materials, to consider again many of the basic concepts in our philosophy of education. He is peculiarly well-fitted for the task. He was born, educated, and has teaching experience in Armenia. He has a command of all the languages, including both the ancient and the modern Armenian, Greek, Latin, French, and

German, which contribute source materials of value for this work. His own philosophy has taken form through an intensive study of History of Education, Educational Psychology, and Philosophy of Education, as they have been developed by our leading educators, which gives him a reliable background for the work he has undertaken. He has presented us with a critical, scholarly piece of work which is free from undue personal bias.

Dr. Sarafian is dealing with a dramatic situation. In the history of civilization, without regard to race, principles of government, or religious creeds, the Armenians are recognized as a people who have developed a unique civilization, not only in spite of, but perhaps through, cross currents and conflicts with many antagonistic groups. They have been able to withstand destruction and to pass on their social heritage from one generation to the next and thus have made their contribution to the social progress of mankind.

It will be interesting to note that in the "History of Education in Armenia" we see a replica of the history of education in Southern and Western Europe. We find a period of Greek influence. We see again the part the Church as an institution has played: There is a Dark Age, a Renaissance, a Golden Age, and a conflict between the old and the new. Through it all, Education has been the means of preservation of a cultural heritage and the perpetuation of a race that would otherwise have become extinct.

Lester B. Rogers,
Dean of the School of Education,
University of Southern California.

AN APPRECIATION

The history of the civilization of any people cannot be complete without a full study of all the cultural values of that nation. The educational findings constitute the heart of those values. On the other hand, the discovery of changes and fluctuations in the culture and gradual development of a nation will furnish the key to the many complicated phenomena of education. This is, to be sure, not an easy task because the beginnings of education coincide with the beginnings of the human race and are, consequently, veiled in an almost impenetrable darkness. Thus, to write a history of education in the true sense of that term one needs a light of some kind in order to reveal the interrelations, bearings and the totality of intellectual and moral conquests, great or small. The historian secures that light by objective researches into the scattered bits of cultural knowledge which bear upon themselves the distinctive imprint of various modifications of human thought.

It is a historical fact, authenticated by evidences, that the Armenian nation, like other nations, has created a civilization of its own (sui generis). That education in Armenia, with its distinctive features and characteristics, has retained its various concepts among the Armenians dispersed in various parts of the world, is a natural conclusion of the above-mentioned fact. Preliminary and partial studies portraying the outlines of Armenian education would open a way to newer and deeper researches.

Dr. Kevork A. Sarafian with "The History of Education in Armenia" has ably entered into that uncultivated field. This serious work is a condensation of the history of educational conquests, which occupy a rather significant place in the spiritual, intellectual and moral heritages amassed and revealed by the Armenian race during the course of centuries, and it is the outcome of a scientific analysis with an impartial soundness of judgment, which is the criterion of the authenticity and intrinsic value of such researches. I have found no single attempt to cover the defects or exaggerate the advantages, the author being preoccupied only in giving a true panoramic portrayal of the facts. A restrained and lucid style and freedom from the prejudices of blood ties, endow the work with an international character, a characteristic of a truly scientific work.

It is praiseworthy that the author has refrained from the temptation of filling the gaps with baseless and confusing speculations. He has permitted the evidences to supply the general material in the building of this well planned structure.

There is no doubt that this scrupulously organized and systematized work will have a distinct place in the general history of education and will merit the well-deserved appreciation of the scientific world.

Bishop Kerekin of Trebizond
Prelate of the Armenian Churches in California.

CHAPTER I

The Statement of the Problem

Students of comparative education in various parts of Europe, and especially in the United States of America, are now devoting a great deal of attention to the study of educational conditions in countries other than their own. The present day ideals of humanity for the establishment of a better international understanding and a more sympathetic relationship among the nations of the world necessitates a thorough survey of the educational theory and practice of all nations in the world, while a first-hand and scientific knowledge secured in this direction is the only foundation upon which the human race can rest its hopes of brotherhood and base its constructive plans. Since education is the only dynamic force which can transform the lives of individual nations and thereby change the cumulative life of the human race at large, this intensive study of comparative education seems full of promise.

It is for this purpose and in this spirit that the leading educational institutions as well as educators of America have been making a series of educational surveys in different countries of the world. It is for this purpose that the American educational magazines[1] during the past few months have been devoting column after column to the study of the educational conditions among various peoples and countries.

Purpose.—The purpose of this present work, though a modest attempt in this direction, is to trace the development of educational thought and practice among the Armenians; to indicate some of the distinctive characteristics of Armenian education; and to compare and contrast Armenian education with Greek, Roman and Arabic education on the one hand, and with European and American education on the other.

---

[1] For example, School and Society, vol. XXVIII, "Hebrew Education", October 6, 1928; "Education in the Republic of Turkey", November 17, 1928; "Political Education in Russia", December 1, 1928. Education, vol. XLIX, "Education in Japan", October 1928.

Sources of Data.—The more important sources of data for this study were: (1) the historical, philosophical and literary writings of ancient and modern Armenia, with such critical reviews as were available; (2) educational magazines and general publications with educational implications; (3) official reports; (4) interviews and correspondence; (5) Armenian constitution and laws; (6) literature on American and European education; (7) personal experience as a graduate from a typical Armenian primary and secondary school and as a teacher in Armenia.

The writer has had available the private library of Dr. K. M. Khantamour, of Fresno, and a private collection of more than one hundred books and documents.

Method of Procedure.—Both source and secondary materials were carefully analyzed in the light of modern educational thought and extensive notes made for reference. This data then supplied the background for a general outline which was followed with slight modification as the work developed.

Before closing these introductory notes it is well to state that this is a modest attempt and a work of pioneering nature. Neither in Armenian, nor in any other foreign language does there exist any comprehensive work, attempting to trace Armenian education from its beginning to the present-day conditions.

CHAPTER II

Who Are the Armenians?

The history of education of any nation, broadly speaking, is the history of civilization of that nation, with special emphasis upon its educational thought and practice. Hence, in this study, the history of education of the Armenian nation, is not presented as something entirely isolated from the general history of Armenian civilization; on the contrary, it will be pictured in greater relief upon the background of the history of Armenian culture. It is pertinent, then, before entering into the discussion of Armenian education, to consider the Armenian race geographically, ethnologically, and historically.

I. Who are the Armenians? Their country is bounded by Asia Minor on the west, the Caspian sea on the east, the Caucasus on the north, and the mountains of northern Mesopotamia on the south, with the majestic figure of Mount Ararat towering over it all. Its plains and numerous valleys are watered by four principal rivers, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Arax, and the Kur. Innumerable snow-covered peaks, valleys, and gorges, and Lake Van, Lake Sevan, and Lake Urmia give the country the Alpine aspect of Switzerland. From this it may be seen that Armenia is situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, and this fact alone can explain the unending invasions and wars and the bloodshed to which Armenia has been subjected throughout the ages.

"The geographical position of Armenia has adversely affected its people. Being on the strategic and commercial highway of Western Asia, she has always been the object of selfish ambitions and the field of bloody struggles. This beautiful country has often been ground under the foot of imperialistic nations. The Assyrians, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Arabs, the Seljuks, the Tartars, and the Turks, all invaded it, one after the other, and fought against the Armenians and among themselves.

"Any nation incessantly subjected to turmoil and trouble would, naturally, be unable to give free scope to its capabilities and attain an eminent position. Under such adverse conditions, Egypt would not have been able to construct her pyramids, Greece to develop her philosophy, nor Rome to carry on her conquests. Time and surroundings prevented the Armenians from occupying a prominent place among nations or influencing international affairs. Nevertheless, we can confidently point to the verdict of history, showing that the Armenian race has not been an unworthy or inglorious race."[1]

Indeed, most of the evils to which the Armenians have been, and still are, subjected, can be accounted for by the fact that the Armenians have established their habitation in the strategical passes of the Caucasus Mountains, which divide Western and Eastern Asia. On the other hand, to the philosopher of history many phenomena are accounted for by the same geographical fact, since the Armenians, favored by the adverse geographical situation, have been the vanguard and the self-sacrificing defenders of western civilization, playing the role of a buffer state and thereby being the first nation to bear the brunt of the fighting. The never-dying spirit of independence, the marvelous tenacity, grit, and seriousness, and stability of character which are the conspicuous traits of the Armenian race are the product of this environment. An eminent geographer connected with the State Department at Washington, D.C., states this fact in a convincing manner and at some length:

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[1] "Armenia and an Outline of Her History", by Vahan M. Kurkjian. Cf. Housharar, vol. XV, No. 124, March 1928.

> "The Armenians' proper place in history has hardly come to light. Enough is known, however, for an appreciation of the truth that, as a people, they were strong in all those spiritual elements of true permanence and depth which alone give real strength. For at least a thousand years and probably for twice and thrice that period they have been subjected to the worst onslaughts of Asiatic barbarity. Yet their spirit never faltered and it is because of their indomitable will to defend at any price the ideals which they held in common with the peoples of the occidental world, that they have survived as a distinct people.
>
> "They might have surrendered a thousand years ago, or else five centuries before this day. Had this course been theirs, the awful vision of the Asiatic sink of corruption overflowing on European soil to its westernmost shores is quickly conjured, with its foul accompaniments of eunuchs, concubines, and spies. But the Armenians remained faithful wardens of Christianity's and western civilization's southeastern gates. Century in and century out they defended the mountain passes which led from Asia into Europe, holding it light to die in order that the great ideals of humanity might survive. Amid doleful and corpse-strewn ruins their bitter sacrifice was consummated. For this service to civilization, for the fact that they could neither be tempted nor bribed to mingle as one with the conquering hordes of savages released by central Asia's sandy wastes, they represent today the creditors of a civilized world for a debt of culture which is still unpaid."[1]

And our ex-ambassador, James W. Gerard, concurs in the above view when he says, "Were the Armenians a weak people they would have been assimilated and lost many centuries ago. They owe their survival as a distinct nation today to their idealism, their courage, and to the higher type of their civilization which could not be overcome and subjected by superior physical force. Their life and achievements in the United States manifest anew the strong national characteristics which have distinguished them for ages."[1]

---

[1] Cf. The Armenians in America, by M. Vartan Malcom, The quotation from the preface written by Leon Dominian, Introduction by James W. Gerard.

II. Ethnologically the Armenians belong to the Indo-European race. The noted British scholar in Armenian civilization, H. F. B. Lynch, states, "All the evidence points to the conclusion that they entered their historical seats from the west as a branch of a considerable immigration of Indo-European peoples crossing the straits into Asia-Minor and perhaps originally coming from homes in the steppes north of the Black Sea. Just as their kinsmen, invading Europe, drove the old races before them, such as the Etruscans, the Ligurians, and the Basques, so the Armenians seem to have filled the void which may have been created by the ravages of the Scythians and to have supplanted the subjects of the old Khaldian dynasty in the possession of the plains of the tableland."[2]

According to the French historian Jacque de Morgan, "The Armenians were a division or a tribe of the Phrygians, and following the destiny of the whole nation, they migrated with them. Phrygians, Armenians, and Macedonians belong to the great Aryan Family." He adds, "The souvenir of the Armenians' passage across the Balkans is preserved in the History of Armenia by Patriarch John VI (Traduction Boré, Arménie, p. 74.)."[3]

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. XI.

[2] Cf. Armenia, vol. II, p. 67, by Lynch.

[3] Cf. Histoire du Peuple Armenien, p. 37. Translated by the author.

Strabo confirms the belief of the ancients in regard to the Armenian immigration from Europe into Asia-Minor, though his explanation of the origin of the Armenians' name is not accepted by all. "There is an ancient story of the Armenian race to this effect, that Armenus of Armenium, a Thessalian city, which lies between Pherae and Larissa on Lake Boebe, as I have already said, accompanied Jason into Armenia and Cyrsilus the Pharsalian and Medius the Larisaean, who accompanied Alexander, say that Armenia was named after him. . . . They also say that the clothing of the Armenians is Thessalian. . . . They say that their style of horsemanship is Thessalian, both theirs are alike that of the Medes. It is thought that Araxes was given the same name as the Peneius by Armenus and his followers because of its similarity to that river, for that river too, they say, was called Araxes because of the fact that it is cleft."[1]

The same view is held by Western anthropologists. Paul Rohrbach states, "I believe the Armenians belong to the Alpine type of the European race. In the southern part of Switzerland people represent almost the same physical types."[2]

Professor R. B. Dickson of Harvard University, after reiterating the above-quoted statement of Herodotus, continues, "This immigrant group represented a people with Indo-European language, and they had blood relationship with the population inhabiting the northern Balkans and around the northen part of the

---

[1] Cf. The Geography of Strabo with an English translation by Horace Leonard Jones, Ph.D., LL.D., in 8 volumes, London, William Heinemann, New York, G. P. Putnams' sons. Vol. V, p. 333 (Book X).

[2] Cf. The Armenian Citizenship Test Case, Armenian translation by D. Dikijian, p. 19.

Black Sea. They came into Asia-Minor as conquerors and settlers, in the seventh century, B. C., and settled down in Armenia. These newcomers assimilated and amalgamated the native population who were of the Alpine type."[1] Professor F. Boas of Columbia University confirms at length the views of the above-mentioned authorities.[2]

This view of the modern anthropologists in regard to Armenian ethnology is supported by the modern German, French, and Russian linguists, who hold that the Armenian language belongs to the western branch of the Aryan languages, which, like ancient Greek and other Aryan languages now extinct, has its origin in antiquity.

III. Armenians in History. No attempt shall here be made to give even the briefest outline of the history of the Armenian race. A few salient points may suffice to explain some of the facts immediately connected with the history of education of Armenia.

The Armenians emigrated from the northern Balkans into Asia Minor during the seventh century B. C. and brought with them the "spiritual possessions" of the Aryan race. It required them three or four centuries to subjugate the "Ourartous," the native inhabitants of the country. Historians agree that the Armenians conquered the natives, assimilated and amalgamated part of them, and drove those remaining into the mountain recesses of the Caucasus. Many cultural tendencies of the Armenians, such as an intense love for Hellenism and an extraordinary devotion to occidental ideals, can be explained partly through an analysis of the racial and cultural heritage which the ancestors of the Armenian race brought with them from the northern Balkans.

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 31.
[2] Cf. Ibid, pp. 66-92.

The next important event is the conquest of Armenia by Alexander the Great, and after a short interval of independence the country was dominated by the Seleucid Kings until 190 B. C. Then the Parthians, an Aryan race of rulers, subjugated not only Persia but also Armenia, the Arsacid dynasty beginning its rule at about 150 B. C. Tigranes the Great, the most illustrious king belonging to this dynasty, who extended his sway as far as the confines of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia, came into active conflict with the Roman Empire and in alliance with his father-in-law, Mithridates, king of Pontus, caused anxiety to the Roman Senate. As a result, Pompey, Scilla, and Lucullus invaded Armenia, and Tigranes the Great was defeated by Lucullus at Tigranocerta, the capital city of Armenia, in 69 B. C.

However, Tigranes the Great formed an alliance with Rome and thereby Armenia became a buffer state between Rome and Persia. Thus Armenia played the rôle which Belgium played during recent years and became a battleground between two rival powers.

In A. D. 301, Gregory the Illuminator converted King Tiridates to Christianity. Tiridates was an ally of Rome and through his influence Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as its official religion. The conversion of the Armenians to Christianity was an event of far-reaching importance. It made the Armenians more prone to lean toward the Byzantine Empire, and on the other hand brought on them the ire of heathen Persia. The war of religious independence fought by the kingless Armenians against the hordes of Persian armies is an episode of almost unparallelled heroism, known in the history of Armenia as the war of the Vartanantz. This bravery of the Armenian race was the fruition of the Christian and national education system inaugurated by Sahak and Mesrop during the fifth century, A. D., more fully treated in succeeding chapters.

In A. D. 387 the Byzantines and the Persians partitioned the country, the eastern part being left to Persia and the western portion coming under the rule of the Byzantine empire.

In A. D. 428, Armenia ceased to be a kingdom and was henceforth governed by Persian Marzbans until 632. From 632 until 839 the Arabs ruled them; thus during this period Armenia became a theatre of incessant wars between the Greeks and Arabs.

During the period from 743 until 1079 Armenia partly won her independence and was ruled by Armenian kings who formed the Pagratid Dynasty. During this period, Armenia became famous culturally. The capital city, Ani, with about 1001 churches and cathedrals, some of which are still standing today, became an object of admiration for those interested in the decorative arts and architecture.

However, Tartar hordes invaded Armenia and put an end to the Pagratid rule. But a few Armenian princes found a place of refuge in the mountain recesses of Cilicia and soon established an independent kingdom, which is known as the Rupinian Dynasty, 1080-1393. During this comparatively long period Armenians came into closer contact with Europe commercially, politically and intellectually. The Armenian kings of Cilicia rendered invaluable assistance to the Crusaders, who found a hospitable base in Cilicia to carry on their campaign against the Mohametans. The splendor of Armenian civilization during this period can be explained by the renewed educational activity manifested in the monasteries of Cilicia.

In 1393 the Mamelukes of Egypt put an end to this dynasty and the Armenians since that time fell under the dominion of the Persians and the Ottoman Turks. In 1828, the Russians delivered Echmiatzin, the seat of the Armenian church, and Erivan from the rule of Persia. In 1878 they captured also Kars, Batum, and certain portions of Armenia from the Ottoman Turks. Up to the time of the World War, Armenia remained partitioned between Russia, Turkey, and Persia. During the World War the Turks atrociously exterminated approximately one million innocent Armenian men, women, and children. During this tragic period the Armenians residing in different sections of the world organized a voluntary army which fought on the side of the Allies in Russia as well as under the banners of General Allenby against the Turks. The Armenians were promised an independent national life in the major part of the Armenian states delivered from the rule of the Turks. But in the annals of history this phase of the European diplomatic ambiguity and treachery is too sad to be described in this brief outline.

However, thanks to the Russian revolution, Armenians organized an independent state in the Caucasus, during 1918-1920, which came into bloody conflict with the Turks and was on the verge of extermination. But the Russian Soviet authorities intervened and saved Armenia from utter annihilation. As a result an Armenian Soviet party took the helm of the government in Armenia in 1921. Since that date Armenia constitutes an independent republic in the Caucasus, politically related only with the Caucasian and Russian Federation of Soviet Republics. This regime, in spite of its chimerical ultra-radical views of society and of the relations of Capital and Labor, fortunately secured for the Armenians a period of peaceful development. This short period of peace represents a glorious chapter in the history of Armenia, during which time in culture and in all phases of civilized life, Armenians have advanced at an unbelievable rate.

The following table shows the dispersion of Armenians according to the last figures, based partly on the latest census, partly on competent opinion.

In Georgia, (Caucasus)	450,000
In Aizerbaidjan	350,000
In Transcaucasia and Northern and Southern Russia	450,000
In the Republic of Armenia	1,000,000
In the Armenian colonies of Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia	125,000
In Egypt, Sudan, and Abbysinia	28,000
In Java and Australia	12,000
In Persia	50,000
In Greece and Cyprus	80,000
In Bulgaria	46,000
In Roumania and Transylvania	43,000
In Europe	50,000
In the United States and Canada	90,000
In South America	30,000

The Armenian race is now entering a new era of rejuvenation and marvelous progress, which is furthered by the reign of peace in the republic of Armenia. But what a price this handful of people have had to pay for the enjoyment of the peaceful pursuit of intellectual and cultural achievements! How aptly Jacque de Morgan pictures the historic and never-ceasing devotion of this race to the ideals of the progress of the West! "The annals of history which are very little known up to this time, are very glorious for this people, who occupy an advanced position of the Indo-European civilization in the midst of Asiatic states. She has not ceased from lifting high the banner of the Aryans. In heathen times Armenians for centuries kept high the banner of Hellenic culture. After the introduction of Christianity they made themselves great champions of the Christian faith and occidental civilization, so that their historic rôle has been very remarkable since the time of the conquest of Asia by the Macedonians."[1]

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[1] Cf. Histoire du Peuple Armenien, pp. 66-67, translated by the author.

CHAPTER III.

The Beginnings of Armenian Education

Undoubtedly, as among other ancient nations, Armenian education had its origin in remote antiquity. But it is almost impossible to fix a definite time at which formal education began to function among the Armenians. The chief reason for this uncertainty lies in the fact that Armenian historical records do not go beyond the date of the introduction of Christianity. Furthermore, such historical records as are available give only meager accounts of the social, intellectual, educational, and cultural conditions of the nation. The Armenian historians chiefly content themselves by describing the political and religious state of affairs, of the nobility and clergy. But scanty information such as we do find, coupled with additional light from Greek, Roman, and contemporaneous historians, gives us enough material to portray the educational conditions of the past.

I. Education before the Introduction of Christianity.—Did Armenia have an educational system prior to the introduction of Christianity? It is almost impossible to give a decisive answer to this question either affirmatively or negatively. However, owing to the lack of historical records it is easy enough to deny categorically the existence of any sort of educational effort in the past. But in the light of other clear proofs such a denial could not be justified. Because, if the ancient Armenians had made no educational effort of any kind, how is it that prior to the introduction of

Christianity the Armenian language was perfected to a degree of classical beauty and clearness, as it is manifested in the remnants of pre-Christian literary gems —fragments of epic poetry—saved from oblivion by the solicitous care of Moses of Khorene, the father of Armenian history? Again, if the Armenians had no reasonable amount of contact and familiarity with the classical literature of Greece, how is it that Tigranes the Great constructed in Tigranacerta, the capital city of Armenia, the Greek theaters where the comedies and tragedies of the Hellenic classics were presented? How shall we explain that his son, Ardavast, the "weak" king, according to the Armenian historian, Moses of Khorene, is praised by Plutarch[1] as the author of poems, discourses, and plays written in classic Greek? It is reasonable to assume, then, that a sudden burst of splendor on the intellectual horizon of Armenia was the consummation of a period of slow development and evolution. Bishop P. Gulesserian, a well-known scholar of Armenian history, is justified in making the following well-balanced analysis of this situation:

> "One ought not to think that prior to the Golden Age the Armenian people had not had intellectual life. Undoubtedly by intellectual life we do not mean the wholesale intellectual development of the nation, but we do mean a certain degree of favorable tendencies toward that development, and, moreover, the existence of intellectual classes. As among all ancient nations, so among the Armenians there existed intellectual development in the political (courtly) circles as well as in the religious (pagan and Christian) spheres. . . . .And no doubt classic plays were presented not only at Ardashad or Tigranacerta, but in the important cities of Armenia.[2]

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[1] Cf. Plutarch, Lives, Crassus, p. 506.

[2] Cf. Political Relations between Armenia and Rome, in Armenian, by H. H. Asadourian, Venice, 1912, pp. 96-97, quoted by P. Gulesserian.

> "We believe that the case of Ardavast II does not represent any exceptional phenomenon, as one foreign historian would have it. Naturally the long and glorious rule of Tigranes the Great, his father, as well as his own rule, and his own literary achievements as the King of Armenia, would attract the attention of foreign historians. But one may assume that there were also other authors who could not attract the attention of the foreign writers. There exist a number of treatises written against the theaters, ascribed to Mantagouni, an Armenian author of the Golden Age. Even if these treatises are not Mantagouni's but were written in imitation of Saint Chrysostom, the fact that they are addressed by an Armenian Vartabet (learned doctor) to the Armenian people is an evidence that theaters existed in Armenia. This, in its own turn, is an evidence of high culture and civilization among the Armenians."[1]

Bishop Gulesserian's opinion in this regard is reinforced by a great number of other scholars, among whom the noted Mechitarist, Parsegh Vartabet Sarkisian, who says, "Armenians developed and advanced intellectually by coming in contact with civilized people, and their oral speech was developed before their written language."[2]

Father Hatzouni, a well-known Mechitarist scholar is not expressing any view contrary to those mentioned above: "The Armenian nation has not had prior to Christianity any public education, the result of which is the lack of literary productions. The Armenian was satisfied with the moderate educational training received in the family as well as in military and political circles like the ancient Greeks, who gave such training to their children prior to the glorious development of their culture. The Armenian court had relations with the external world and was an exception to the general rule. The son of Tigranes the Great, Ardavast, who was the hellenophile son of the hellenophile father, had written tragedies, discourses and stories, according to Plutarch, who had seen them."[1]

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[1] Cf. Azk, special number. 1915-1916, Article, "The Armenian Students of the Golden Age", in Armenian, by Bishop P. Gulesserian. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Agathangelus and His Centuries—Old Secret, in Armenian, by Parsegh Vartabet Sarkisian, of Venice. Translated by the author.

Summing up the points brought out in this respect we might state that there existed some sort of formal education for the training of leaders among the upper strata of Armenian society during the pagan period. This education was greatly influenced by Greek education. This fact is borne out by the dominance of Hellenic culture at the court of the Arsacid Kings as well as among the pagan priesthood.

II. **Education after the Introduction of Christianity.**—Armenian education had its beginning with the introduction of Christianity as the state religion of the country. As the Reformation laid the foundation of the public elementary education in Europe as well as in the United States, so in Armenia the same religious motives stimulated the leaders of the new Christian church to inaugurate a system of public education whereby the spread of Christianity would be facilitated and consummated with success. Indeed, when Christianity was formally adopted by King Tiridates, in A. D. 301, as the official religion of the country, there still existed in Armenia a very strong sentiment for the old pagan religion. The strongholds of the old worship could not be destroyed in one day, or even in one century, by sheer physical force, without the assistance of a more potent factor, education, as an instrument of conscious evolution. True, Christianity had a long history[1] in Armenia even before its official adoption in A. D. 301. It was preached first by the apostles Thaddeus (A. D. 35-43) and Bartholomew (44-50). During the early stages of Christianity fervent and pious Christian martyrs had demonstrated their faith in Christ as their savior, but these people represented only a small fraction of the total population when Christianity was officially proclaimed by royal decree as the religion of the country.

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[1] Cf. Education among the Ancient Armenians, by Vartan Hatzouni, in Armenian, p. 83, translated by the author.

It is, therefore, no wonder that Gregory the Illuminator, after converting King Tiridates to Christianity, wisely persuaded him to order the old temples of polytheism demolished and in their place new churches and cathedrals constructed. Yet Christianity would not have been able to send its roots into the depths of the Armenian soul without the inauguration of an effective system of education. St. Gregory and Tiridates, both highly educated in the Hellenic centers, could not disregard the importance of education as an instrument of conscious evolution. Agathangelus, the fourth century historian, narrating all the details of the introduction of Christianity, portrays to us the educational system instituted by those great leaders in the following manner:

> "Tiridates, the King, gave orders to gather together Armenian children coming from different provinces at different locations in the confines of Armenia to train them in the literary arts. He ordered also the appointment of faithful teachers for these children. Furthermore he ordered the bringing together of the sons of the foul and pagan priesthood at suitable places in different groups and classes, and financed the education of all by royal subsidies. The plan was to separate them in two

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[1] For an excellent account in English, see Armenia, vol. I, by H. F. B. Lynch, pp. 277-285.

major groups; one group to study the Syriac language and literature, the other the Greek. And all at once, in a very short period, the sections of the country in which the people were savage-minded, sluggards, and brutish, they all became scholars of the prophets, erudites of the apostles, and heirs of the Gospel, and they were not at all ignorant of all the Commandments of God."[1]

An analysis of this passage in the light of the complete account of Agathangelus helps us to arrive at the educational scheme which was put into effect in Armenia with the introduction of Christianity.

It may be summarized as follows: 1. Schools were established in various sections of the country.

2. From all provinces and corners of the country Armenian children were assembled and classified in different groups and placed in different schools.

3. These were mostly the children of "sluggards," "brutish" people, probably from the uncultured peasant and provincial classes.

4. Special care was shown to gather together the children of the pagan priesthood. It is known that the priesthood among the ancient Armenians was hereditary, and the children of these priests being educated in Christian schools were destined to occupy the positions of their pagan fathers, only to officiate in the churches of Christianity rather than in polytheistic temples. The wisdom of such a procedure can

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[1] **Agathangelus** is the name of the historical document supposedly written during the fourth century, A. D., which serves as a source for the history of this period. Scholars are not unanimously agreed as to the identity of the author. Foreign research scholars assert that he was an Armenian attached to the court of Tiridates, who wrote his book in Armenian, and that it was later translated into Greek. But the Mechitarist father, Parsegh Sarkissian, in his critical study of Agathangelus, arrives at the conclusion that this work was written first in Greek by a Greek and was later translated into Armenian by Gorioun. It is beyond our purpose to determine which view is correct. The above quotation is translated by the author.

readily be seen. One may assume that the priesthood represented a select group intellectually and socially, and the children of the priesthood would naturally, on the whole, at least, represent a comparatively select group of leaders. And removing them from their home towns and educating them in a new environment, was also effective in rooting out the old polytheism.

5. The treasury of the state was to finance these schools.

6. The curriculum was confined to the study of the Syriac and Greek languages and literature. The students of history are familiar with the fact that primitive Christianity was first spread among the countries which were in the immediate vicinity of Palestine. The Syrian church at Edessa and Nisibin, with its advanced schools of higher learning played a rôle of tremendous importance in the early days of Christianity. This explains the importance of the Syriac for the early Armenian church. The importance of the Greek is almost self-evident, because Christianity was re-enforced immensely by the fortifying influence of the Greek philosophy cultivated especially at the Alexandrian school as well as the schools of Athens, Caesarea, Antioch, and Byzantium. The early Christian church had an international[1] character, was a kind

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[1] Cf. Armenia, vol. I, by H. F. B. Lynch, pp. 280-281. "What was the nature of this early Christianity which made its way in despite of persecution among a barbarous people, professing a crude and perhaps unamiable form of paganism? It is difficult to believe that the religion of the first Christians resembled even remotely the later State religion of the Roman Empire, which under the name of Christianity was spread over the world by the imperial armies and has been bequeathed as a troublesome legacy to the modern world. The origins of this great spiritual movement are veiled in twilight, but from the shadows and uncertain glimmer shines forth a Personality which no doubts and no disappointments can assail. Round this Personality centered many and diverse spiritual conceptions, old as time itself and young as time. They were quickened into new life by the emotional quality of a great

of Christian brotherhood, and Gregory the Illuminator was a representative of the Greek school.

7. St. Gregory, imbued with such a spirit of Christianity and with a yearning to evangelize the Armenians, brought with him from Caesarea Christian brothers who could teach the doctrines of Christianity as well as the fundamental tools for its attainment, namely the Syriac and Greek languages in which tongues the messages of Christ were enfolded. So, according to Agathangelus, the early teachers in these Armenian schools were not Armenians but mostly Greeks and Syrians. It is easy to perceive the international character of the training given in these schools; the languages taught were foreign languages, the central theme of education was the body of fundamental principles of Christianity and Christian ethics, and the teachers were chiefly foreigners.

8. These schools made a very serious attempt to educate all people in the principles of Christianity; hence they constituted the beginnings of a system of public education. Unfortunately this effort at popularizing education through the agency of state schools,

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example; and they were kept alive and made to focus upon the domain of morality by the daily and intimate intercourse of the members of a brotherhood which should embrace all the creatures of God. It is essential to the fruitfulness of such a community that they should maintain, not internal discipline nor even the agreement of the members upon matters of doctrine among themselves, but the enthusiasm which prompted their first efforts, a high sense of individual responsibility among the members, and the habit of mutual tolerance, mutual help, mutual consolation, and, above all, of mutual love. The simple ceremonies of the early Church were calculated to promote this spirit. The candidate was admonished by the rite of baptism of the serious nature of the resolve which he had taken to break with the world of sense and appearance, and to become initiated into the higher meaning and purpose by which it is supported and inspired. The fast redressed the balance between the soul and the unruly flesh; and the agapes or love-feasts induced a close communion among the brothers, the necessary corollary to communion with God."

scattered throughout the different sections of the country, did not enjoy a continuous life. Political turmoil and vicissitudes upturned the situation entirely and made its continuance impossible. Had the political situation been favorable, public education among the Armenians would have had a chance to perpetuate itself at this early period in the history of the world, and it is difficult to imagine what might have resulted in the development of the Armenian race and its particular culture if the situation had been reversed. As we shall see, after the death of the two leaders one or two serious attempts were made in the direction of public education but they too have been of short duration.

9. The subjects of the curriculum have been referred to in the above quotation from Agathangelus; in addition to the study of Syriac and Greek, the students received thorough instruction in the Prophets, the Apostles, and in the general contents of the Bible. The pagan classics were probably ignored as unworthy subjects for study. In the Armenian church, as in the Roman church, pagan literature was looked on askance and the true believers were exhorted to shun the evil contamination of these literary productions. No doubt, here and there were found some individuals who would study the classics under ban, but this would constitute an exception to the general rule.

10. Agathangelus describes also the establishment of a Royal School, where young princes and even the king himself were educated. But details of the curriculum of these special-type schools are lacking. It is easy, however, to assume, in the light of other

data, that even in these schools the main tenets of Christianity were emphasized along with the Syriac and especially the Greek. We base our assumption in this regard upon the fact that King Tiridates, who was a very warlike and diplomatic ruler prior to his conversion to Christianity, toward the end of his life retired into a solitary place for penance. Furthermore, Armenian princes have at various occasions displayed a profound knowledge of the Bible, with which they must have been made conversant by the training received at these schools.

III. The Two Leaders of the Early Education.—Tiridates, the King, was the son of Chosroes, who was assassinated by Anak, the very father of Gregory the Illuminator. The motive of Anak's action was political. He was sent to the court of Tiridates as a tool of the Sassanid Kings, who had gained accession to the Persian throne, and naturally were hostile to the Arsacid dynasty of Armenia, which represented the other branch of the Parthians, whose rule they abolished in Persia. Furthermore the Sassanids of Persia were the unflinching foes of the Romans, whereas the Arsacids of Armenia were the allies of Rome. Upon the assassination of Chosroes, the young crown prince was saved from death by his guardian, and was taken into the borders of the Roman empire, but he received a thorough Greek education. At the same time Gregory, the young son of Anak, was saved by his guardian and was taken to Caesarea, capital of Cappadocia, and he was profoundly trained in Greek Christian education. Later on Gregory entered the service of the crown prince, Tiridates, in order to expiate the sin of his father who had orphaned Tiridates. They entered Armenia together with the assistance of a Roman army, and Tiridates regained possession of his father's throne. Gregory was thoroughly loyal to the king except in his religious belief. An occasion came in which Gregory stuck staunchly to his Christian faith and was put in a deep dungeon. He remained there thirteen years and lived the life of a saintly martyr, and was taken out of the dungeon only to cure Tiridates from his strange malady. Upon the miraculous cure of the king, the latter was converted to Christianity and with him the whole nation was ordered to adopt the religion of Christ. Tiridates was a cultured king. He was also very astute and wise.

But the glamour of holiness surrounded the head of Gregory the Illuminator. He belonged to the category of men who live for convictions, service, and devotion. His educational contribution to Armenia was but a natural fruit of his transcendental faith in Christianity. His evangelistic zeal logically lead him to educate the whole nation and his is the honor of establishing for the first time a system of public schools with the intention of promulgating the reading of the tenets of Christianity. In classic Armenian literature there exists a book entitled "Hajachabadoum," a series of religious treatises, the authorship of which is ascribed to Gregory the Illuminator. A rapid perusal of this book convinces one of the noble, ascetic, and religious character of this man. The purpose of education gleaned from his writings is to be: "God has commanded us to understand His commandments and to escape the snares and pitfalls of Satan."[1]

"To shake off the old man and to put on the new who is according to the Image of God, holy and just, and to shake off everything evil with the grace of the Holy Basin."[2]

"My brethren and children, I wish to write to you about that which I gathered from the holy words of Christ. . . . Because he who acts and teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is said Christ began to act and to teach till the day of his ascension to Heaven."[3]

Such is the spirit of the man who became the evangelist and first educational leader in Armenia. Naturally the educational purpose and system inaugurated by him would reflect the intensely religious spirit of the man who lived the life of a true saint, and the Armenian nation rightly calls him St. Gregory the Illuminator.

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[1] Cf. Hajachabadoum, in Ancient Armenian, p. 77, translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 78.

[3] Cf. Ibid, p. 161.

CHAPTER IV

The Decline of the Early Christian Schools

The intense evangelistic zeal of St. Gregory the Illuminator was responsible for the educational activity of the early period. Upon the death of the saintly Katholikos[1] of Armenia and of the first Christian king, Tiridates, and owing to the adverse political conditions then prevailing, the momentum of the evangelistic activity and educational endeavors was gradually slackened. Also, it must not be forgotten that the reactionary opposition of the adherents of the old pagan worship was beginning to reassert itself. This was true especially in some sections of the country such as the province of Kolthen, where the ancient pagan religion had an indestructible stronghold, because it was the historical seat of the Armenian troubadours, who sang the valor of the old pagan gods and commemorated the heroic feats of their pagan kings. Faustus[2] of Byzantium describes the chaos reigning during that period of transition and leavening:

"Because when they adopted Christianity they did it not as a matter of zealous faith, but as an aberration of mind . . . . few people who were conversant with Greek and Syriac literature, to some degree at least, were able to comprehend sufficiently the spirit of the new faith. However, those who were not highly educated whether princes or peasantry, were not able to comprehend anything; they understood absolutely nothing, not even the slightest particle of the ideas which they heard, even if the Vartabets would preach to them day and night, pouring upon them the tenets of the Christian doctrine with the intensity of a torrential rain.[1]

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[1] **Katholikos** is the title given to the head of the Armenian church. Gregory the Illuminator was ordained bishop at Ceasarea by Ghevontius, bishop of Cappadocia, a region which is considered to be the early field of the evangelistic activity of St. Bartholomew, the apostle to Armenia.

[2] **Faustus of Byzantium** is anither classical historian of the fourth century who is considered to be of Greek origin and who has written his history in Greek, which has been translated into classical Armenian at a later period. Some assert, however, that he was Armenian.

This vivid description by Faustus, written perhaps with a certain degree of rhetorical exaggeration, throws sufficient light upon the state of affairs we should expect in a period of transition and leavening. Certainly, Christianity and new ideas and ideals had to carry on a long fight to gain the upper hand in the struggle for existence which was now being waged between the new and the old religions. It indicated also that the schools established by St. Gregory, in spite of their universal aim and public character, did not succeed in reaching the wider circles of the Armenian race. At the most, they succeeded in training select groups scattered over the wide areas of the country.

We who are more than sixteen hundred years removed from the scene of events occurring during that period, undoubtedly have the advantage of regarding conditions with a more or less clear perspective. Therefore it is not difficult for us to understand that Christianity and the new educational scheme sponsored by Tiridates and St. Gregory had to be modified to fit the particular needs, customs, culture, and in short, the national psychology of the Armenian race in order to gain an effective hold upon the soul of the Armenian people. It was natural then that the international character of the early Christianity and education had to be modified to a considerable degree.

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[1] Cf. Faustus of Byzantium, III, Chapter XIII. (In ancient Armenian). Translated by the author.

This could not be achieved, however, without proper means and the necessary tools. The lack of an Armenian alphabet[1] made itself felt at every turn. The remedying of this national evil was left to a dynamic personality, Mesrop, whose particular work and contribution will be discussed in the two following chapters.

The significant contribution of Mesrop would be unintelligible without some consideration of those who served as the precursors of the great national awakening which paved the road leading to the Golden Age.

Nerses Bartev, or the Great, as he is unanimously designated by all the Armenian historians, was one of these men who through their heroic efforts to revive the educational consciousness of the Armenian nation, prepared the way which finally terminated at the glorious age of splendor. Nerses was the finished product of the Greek Cappadocian school, having been trained in Caesarea, as well as at Byzantium. He married the granddaughter of Vache Mamikonian. She was the sister of King Diran. Of this marriage was born one of the most outstanding leaders and scholars of the Golden Age, Sahak Bartev, the Katholikos of all Armenia during that period.

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[1] The great majority of authorities uphold the theory that the Armenians lacked an alphabet prior to the invention of it by Mesrop during the fifth century. They assert, and historical facts bear out their contention, that the Armenians used the Greek, Pehlavi, and Syriac alphabets. A few authorities, however, insist that the Armenians used an old alphabet of native origin, which was abandoned on account of its inadequacy or even as a result of the overzealousness of the early Christian evangelists who preferred to destroy everything pagan in order to strengthen the hold of Christianity. And when Mesrop wanted to invent the Armenian alphabet he discovered the remnants of this old alphabet preserved by an Assyrian scholar, Daniel. The characters were twenty-two in number, and Mesrop perfected them by the addition of fourteen more. The question of the origin of the alphabet has not been finally disposed of.

Nerses the Great was the prime organizer of that national council, which convened at Ashdishad[1] during 362-363. This famous national gathering made, among others, the following decisions of utmost importance.

a. To open schools at various places to teach Syriac and Greek.

b. To establish, at suitable places, poorhouses, orphanages, hospices, hospitals, etc., and to support them through the proceeds of the agricultural lands belonging to the Holy See.

c. To found monasteries and convents for both sexes. It is recorded in a majority of Armenian history textbooks that Nerses is the founder of more than two thousand such institutions which, in addition to their particular purposes, served also as institutions of learning.

The educational efforts and humanitarian endeavors of Nerses are described by Faustus: "He established at various places, in all the provinces of Armenia, schools for teaching Syriac and Greek. . . . He exhorted everybody, chiefly the king himself, as well as all the princes and grandees, to show sympathy to their servants, to their minors, and to their pupils, and to love them as their intimates. . . . And there reigned under him throughout all the churches peace and a spirit of reconstruction . . . and in the church the enlightenment prevailed with full lustre."[2] The same historian pays high tribute to the character of this teacher and preacher. "He taught all that he actually practiced. He was holy, wide-awake, and discreet, and he made everyone ready to receive the Word of God.

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[1] Cf. Faustus of Byzantium, IV, chapter IV. (In Ancient Armenian).

[2] Cf. Faustus of Byzantium, especially on p. 105-106. Translated by the author.

Like the prophets and apostles, he taught everyone the spirit of charity."[1]

The whole keynote of his educational purpose and philosophy of life seems to be **sympathy, love,** and **charity.** The institutions which he established are eloquent testimonies to this effect.

As the reader may conclude for himself, the schools established by Nerses did not differ from the early Christian schools either in purpose or in curriculum. The schools were in the same manner permeated by the international spirit of early Christianity and its schools where foreign languages were taught and where Christian doctrines, especially the Biblical truths, were propagated. Nerses himself, being the pupil of the Greek father, Basil the Great, carried out in Armenia the spirit and principles of early Christianity, laying emphasis upon charity and all the humanitarian virtues. Nerses did not see the necessity of nationalizing Armenian education in order to make it an effective tool for changing completely the character of the whole nation. He died c. 372, after endeavoring in vain to restrain the follies of the ruling king, Bab, who is by some asserted to have assasinated this holy man by poisoning. The rôle played by this splendid character and the nature of his contributions are well expressed by Dr. Topchian: "The founders of the Armenian literature of the Golden Age, Sahak and Mesrop, received their education in the days of Nerses. The father of poetry, Moses of Khorene, clearly tells about the latter (Mesrop) that he received his education from Nerses. . . . Therefore, one may insist that we owe indirectly to Nerses the invention of the alphabet. . . . It is evident that the Golden Age of the Armenian literature could not have burst out at one stroke. Nerses paved its road and prepared it, and he established the foundations of the future civilization upon such solid ground that his successors honored him with the epithet, 'Great'."[1]

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 106.

The death of Nerses was soon followed by great political upheavals. King Bab, at all events, was not in sympathy with the reforms of Nerses. He confiscated the rich estates attached to the Holy See. It is plain, then, that upon the death of Nerses there remained no one to continue his educational and humanitarian reforms. This may also have been partly due to the fact that great political upheavals soon rocked the foundations of the ruling house of the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia. The Sassanid Kings of Persia, suspicious of the growing prestige of the Byzantine empire in Armenia, because of the growth of Christianity in both countries, instituted a series of persecutions, aiming at the extermination of Christianity itself. As a result of this policy Armenia became a theater of war between the Persians and the Byzantines. And in A. D. 387, Theodosius the Great of Byzantium agreed upon the partitioning of Armenia between Persia and himself, the western part—a minor part—coming under the influence of Byzantium, and the eastern portion being left to the suzerainty of Persia.

Consequently, the very existence of Armenian national entity was threatened—a fact fully realized by the responsible leaders of Armenia. It was an all-important problem for them to secure the perpetuation of the cultural, political, and national existence of the Armenian race. The Christianity of that period which was imbued with internationalism depending for its perpetuation in Armenia upon the churches in charge of the Christian brothers of foreign origin and also upon schools taught by foreign teachers, teaching foreign languages and general doctrines of the primitive Christianity, had utterly failed to solve this all-important problem.

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[1] Cf. **Die Anfænge des Armenischen Mœnchtums**, translated into modern Armenian, in **Louys**, 1905, p. 542. Translated into English by the author.

CHAPTER V

The Golden Age of Armenian Culture

No period in the history of Armenia equals in importance the short space of time which covers the reign of King Vramshabooh (A. D. 391-414) and the pontificate of Sahak Bartev (A. D. 390-439). During this short period a nation was born; a nation which lived ever after, throughout the centuries of persecution, bloodshed, and turmoil, preserving the purity of her racial characteristics and the identity of her unique culture. It was not, therefore, an idle exercise of imagination on the part of Gorioun, the historian of this age, to say, "At that time the blest and enviable land of the Armenians became unquestionably wonderful."[1]

Indeed, the reader of the accounts found in the three- main sources, Lazar of Pharpi, Gorioun, and Moses of Khorene, cannot but admire the extraordinary intellectual activity, the unparalleled zeal for creation, and the high enthusiasm for national awakening that were manifested in this period which was to culminate in the Golden Age of Armenian culture. It seems as though the propitious hour had struck for the final solution of the vital issue for the Armenian nation, "To be or not to be," during this short-lived political peace, a welcome boon which was the fruition of the wise diplomacy of King Vramshabooh. Fortunately, at that decisive hour, the Armenians were favored by the will of Providence in having amongst them, in addition to the king himself, two chosen leaders, Sahak and Mesrop, who laid the foundation of Armenian culture on a solid base, thereby guaranteeing the existence of the nation for succeeding ages. "It was the goodness of the king, his generosity of heart, his fame for righteousness, his keen intelligence, rather than his political achievements that served to aggrandize his royal prestige. The King of Kings of Persia, Vram, and the Caesar of Byzantium appointed him to arbitrate the disputes which had arisen between the Persian and Greek agents in Mesopotamia."[1]

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[1] Cf. Gorioun, in classical Armenian, p. 22. Translated by the author.

The Golden Age was a period of feverish activity in the fields of: (I) Literature, (II) Education, and (III) Evangelization.

1. **Literary Achievements.**—We had occasion to observe in the previous chapter that the real benefits of Christianity and of the Christian schools did not succeed in reaching the wider circles of the Armenian people. The Scriptures were read in the churches not in the Armenian language but in Syriac and Greek, of which the great majority of people could understand nothing. There was no Armenian alphabet. The decrees of the king and all the official records were written in the Greek, Syriac, and Persian alphabets. To remedy this situation and to bring the messages of Christianity directly to the masses of the Armenian people, it was deemed necessary to train a number of official translators and commentators who would read the Scriptures in Armenian in the churches, translating them from the Greek or Syriac. This proved to be a painful task. And few people could benefit from such measures of palliation. At any rate, the translators were so few in number that Mesrop himself had to

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[1] Cf. History of Armenia, in Armenian, p. 148, by Father Sahak Der Mosesian, Venice. Translated by the author.

hurry from one church to another to perform the task.[1] In view of this anomalous situation, it is not surprising that Christianity and Christian culture gradually lost their ground. People in the remote provinces were reverting back to their former pagan worship and ideals. Yet the nation was Christian at least in form, and was being persecuted as such by the Sassanid Kings of Persia.

Mesrop, (A. D. 361-440), who was an ardent believer in Christianity and a "Tarkmanich," (translator and teacher), sensed with grieving heart the pressing need of the moment. He discovered also that the same dificulty was encountered in the schools. "And the teachers moaned and sighed in view of the fact that their efforts were in vain, for the ambitious students who were eager to learn, were not able to derive any benefits from the teaching of the spiritual lessons, which constituted the food and nutrition of the seekers of truth."[2]

And owing to the insufficiency of the native schools, large numbers of students were under the necessity of travelling abroad for their higher education, thereby incurring the hardships of such an enterprise:

> "The blessed teacher Mashdotz (Mesrop) worried a great deal, seeing the expensive trips of the Armenian students who wasted their lives by long, expensive travels and wanderings in the schools of Syrian science. For the functions of the church were carried on in the Syriac in the monasteries and churches of Armenia. And the masses of

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[1] Cf. **Moses of Khorene,** in acient Armenian, III, p. 47. "Mesrop himself was both reader and translator. And in his absence the people could not understand anything, owing to the lack of translators." Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Lazar of Pharpi,** in ancient Armenian. Book I, p. 11. Translated by the author.

people could not hear and understand anything, for the simple reason that they were not familiar with that language."[1]

Therefore to a far-seeing eye only one way out of this impossible situation revealed itself; it was the emancipation of the Armenian nation from this cosmopolitan and ineffective culture and religion. In order to achieve this end it was necessary first to secure the tools of intellectual attainment. Unfortunately the Armenians either did not have an alphabet, one of the most essential tools of intellectual work, or they had it in an imperfect form and had abandoned the use of it during the past ages. Mesrop, who was called the **Teacher of All Armenia,** took this task upon himself and immediately went to consult[2] with Sahak, the Katholikos, who himself was a wise and cultured Greek scholar. Realizing the far-reaching importance and tremendous difficulties of their enterprise, they finally endeavored to secure the assistance of the king. 'Press this invention so beneficial for Armenia, during your reign. This will suffice to secure for you the benefit of never-to-be-forgotten memories and heavenly enjoyments, more so than your worldly reign."[3] Happily the king also saw the urgent necessity of this national endeavor and supported it not only with his wise counsels but also with subsidies from the national treasury. The actual task was entrusted to Mesrop, and the king and the Katholikos acted as his advisers. It is beyond our scope to describe the wanderings of Mesrop, his sleepless nights, unending toils, and long researches for some light upon this great task. Some of the Armenian historians who take a genuine delight in ascribing the accomplishment of memorable achievements to divine intervention, in the same manner ascribe the invention of the Armenian alphabet to a miracle. Scholars, however, agree that Mesrop rediscovered the remnants of the old Armenian alphabet of twenty-two characters, which were preserved in the archives of a Syrian scholar, Daniel. But these were utterly inadequate to express all shades of sound found in the highly developed Armenian language of the time. So Mesrop, with the assistance of Sahak, invented fourteen additional characters, seven vowels and seven consonants, with the aid of which a perfect alphabet was created, which was capable of giving phonetic expression to all the sounds of the Armenian language, a phonetic language with a phonetic alphabet, comprising thirty-six characters for thirty-six sounds. In the final arrangement of the alphabet, a Greek caligraph, Hropanus, gave very valuable assistance to Mesrop. In this way the main tool of intellectual attainment was created. This memorable event took place A. D. 404-406.

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[1] Cf. Lazar of Pharpi, in ancient Armenian. Book 1, p. 10. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 11.

[3] Cf. Ibid, p. 10.

The next logical step was to take advantage of the full benefits of this essential tool. Mesrop hastened to point the way by translating the Proverbs of Solomon into Armenian. Upon his return to Armenia, he and his followers hurried to Sahak to secure his assistance in the translation of the whole Bible. Sahak represented the highest scholarship of Armenia during that period. He was not only trained in the Scriptures[1] but also was fully conversant with the arts of Rhetoric, Music, Philosophy, etc. With the assistance of two of their pupils, Eznik of Gulpi, and Joseph of Bagni, the great Katholikos set his hands to his task. The work, which was a new creation rather than a mere translation, was completed in A. D. 410. He used an authentic copy of the Septuagint as a basis of translating it into the then leading speech of refined society. That this translation was really unmatched is borne out by the simple fact that it has served throughout the ages as the model of classic beauty, clearness, harmony, and perfection of linguistic achievement. La Croze, after analyzing its charms, calls it "the Queen of Translations." After the Bible they translated several important works such as: The Church History of Eusebius, The Life of St. Anthony by Athanasius, some of Philo's works, those of Basil the Great, St. Chrysostom, and Cyril of Jerusalem. Aristotle's Categories, and also Porphyry's commentaries on them, were translated. "Armenian students were found in Athens, Alexandria, and Rome, and some of them attained celebrity in their chosen pursuits. To this tendency we owe the preservation in Armenian of many works that have perished in their original languages. Such are the chronicles of Eusebius, Faustus of Byzantium, Lerubna of Edessa (Cf. Wenrich, **DeAuctorum Graecorum Versionibus, Arabicis, Armeniensis,** etc., Leipzig, 1842.[1])"

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[1] Cf. Lazar of Pharpi, Book I, p. 10.

With the invention of the alphabet, and through the establishment of native schools, the literary activity in Armenia was not to be confined to translation. Soon there arose a group of original writers who edited histories, philosophical and religious treatises, and rhetorical works. But in passing we must emphasize the fact that the Armenian literature from now on was permeated with intense religious spirit and while rich in religious poetry and treatises it is not comparable to the literary achievements of the Greeks and Romans. Yet it represents the ideals and aspirations of the Armenian nation, and has served as the bulwark of national defense and preservation, in the midst of the barbaric invasion of the central Asiatic hordes, as well as in the vicissitudes of the ever-changing political situation in which their geographical location had thrust them to live.

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[1] Cf. Encyclopædia Brittanica, article on Armenia, Ninth Edition.

It is a curious fact that the intense literary production, intellectual activity, and spiritual awakening of the Armenian race were achieved in the short space of from twenty-one to twenty-five years. At the end of this time, marked by the death of Vramshabooh, Armenia was depriced of its political peace:

> "It is an unfortunate coincidence that, at the moment when Armenian literature was dawning in golden hues, the sun of Armenian liberty was going to its eclipse. While schools were being opened and books translated by the efforts of Sahak the Katholikos and Mesrop the Vartabet, western Armenia was already annexed to the Greek empire, and eastern Armenia was soon to receive the death blow planned by the Persian Court of Ctesiphon.
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> "Hardly a quarter of a century had elapsed since the invention of the new alphabet, when Ardashes IV, the last of the Arshagouni (Arsacid) Kings, was deposed by the order of the Persian Satrapy.
>
> "Fully fifteen centuries separate us from that date; the Armenian fatherland not only did not regain its former life, but it passed through horrible periods and lost myriads of children.
>
> "It is a consoling and cheering fact, however, that if Armenia fell, the Armenian nation stood with its spirit ever aflame like the briar shrub of Horeb, or the secred fire of the Zoroastrians. The persistent struggle which began on the field of Avarayr under the leadership of Vartan, which for one hundred and

fifty years waged against the Sassanid autocrats; the independent state of Ani under the Bagratids, which lasted for one hundred and sixty years; the Cilician Kingdom founded by Roupen, which for three hundred years withstood many shocks, these and many other facts were the excellent manifestations of the undying spirit of Armenia.

"If the Greeks and the Jews of the oldest nations have displayed equal vitality with more efficiency than the Armenians, it should be taken into consideration that the first of these nations enjoyed better opportunities, while the other has lost many of its peculiar attributes. Our nearest neighbor, the Persian, has been deprived of its Aryan character and lost many of its splendid traditions. It is only through their ruins that Assyria and Babylon speak to us; the glories of Palmyra have been buried under the sands; the splendor of Antioch has been blown to the winds; the courts of Pontus, Cappadocia and Lydia have vanished; of the Latin colonies of the Levant nothing but tombstones remain. But the Armenian race, though terribly stricken by destructive powers, is still today a loyal trustee of its national soul."[1]

Critical scholars of Armenian history join in unanimous consent in pointing out that the Armenian nation owes the creation of this national soul in a large measure to Sahak and Mesrop. For the spiritual heritage which was bequeathed to the succeeding generations of Armenians by the students of the Sahak-Mesropian school was more powerful in its effect than mere political independence or military supremacy. It is hardly conceivable that the Armenian race could have survived as it did if it had not possessed the weapons of that invincible power hidden in the treasures of her splendid culture, initiated by these two immortal fathers of the Armenian nation.

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[1] Cf. Armenia and an Outline of Her History, by Vahan M. Kurkjian, Housharer, vol. XV, no. 125, April 1928.

CHAPTER VI

The Golden Age of Armenian Culture—Continued

II. The Educational Activity of Mesrop.—As we have already seen, Mesrop, actuated by an intense zeal for evangelization, resorted to education as the most potent means for achieving his end. It was natural for him to appreciate more than any other person the importance of education since, as we have already noticed, he was a "Tarkmanitch," a teacher, and an interpreter, before he invented the alphabet. Therefore, as soon as he returned to Armenia with the newly invented alphabet in his hands, he and Sahak counselled the king to open schools. Although the exact wording of the royal decree ordering the establishment of schools is not reported to us by the historians of the age, the Father of Armenian History describes this event in the following manner: "When Mesrop arrived and brought with him the alphabet of our tongue, with the order of Vramshabooh, he and Sahak the Great gathered select groups of children, who were intelligent, well-bred, well-fed, sweet-voiced and possessed of voices, and established schools in all the provinces, and educated children throughout that portion of Armenia which was under the Persian rule."[1]

The new schools were of two types: one for the leaders, the other for the common folk.

A. The School for Leaders.—Although the historians of the period do not give a full description of these schools, from a careful reading of their works one can glean the fact that at Vagharshabad, the capital of Armenia, a central school was founded offering higher education for a select group of students who were to be trained as leaders. Some authorities go so far as to designate this school The University of Vagharshabad—but to a critical student of educational history this central school seems to have been an institution of higher learning, centrally located, where boarding students from different provinces of Armenia were assembled, their tuition and board being paid from the royal treasury. "From all sides of Armenia and from the provinces they arrived filled with overflowing zeal at the newly opened fountain of the Knowledge of God. Because it was from the seat of Kings and Katholikoses that there sprang forth the grace of God's commandments."[1] In this central school the children of the princes were trained also; especially was this true in the case of the most glorious house of the Mamikonians,—from whose ranks Armenia received a succession of God-fearing, heroic, and highly educated leaders. For the students of Armenian history the names of Vartan and Vahan Mamikonian stand forth as shining lights, illuminating the darkest hours of Armenian history, out of which emerged the religious, and partly, also, the political emancipation of Armenia from the tyrannic pressure of the Persian Sassanid Kings.

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[1] Cf. Moses of Khorene, Book III, p. 54. In ancient Armenian. Translated by the author.

B. Schools for Common Folk.—In addition to the establishment of a central school for the leaders,

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[1] Cf. Gorioun, p. 23. In ancient Armenian. Translated by the author.

Sahak and Mesrop saw the necessity of organizing at numerous centers elementary schools where at least the rudiments of reading could be taught to the children of the common folk. Otherwise, they realized that Christianity would not take a firmer hold upon the soul of the Armenian race. They "asked and begged from the king, young children to learn the alphabet. And as soon as a great number of them became familiar with it, the latter ordered the teaching of the alphabet in every place."[1]

That these public schools were efficient is borne out by Lazar of Pharpi in his history: "And after the great work of St. Sahak was carried out, schools were established for the education of the common herd, and the classes of literate peoples were increased, vying with one another."[2]

All these educational reforms were carried out in that portion of Armenia which constituted the zone of Persian influence. It was necessary to institute almost the same sort of reforms in the Byzantine zone of influence. The teaching of the Armenian alphabet and language was more needed in this section than anywhere else, because cosmopolitanism and internationalism were more rampant here than in any other section of the country. But when Mesrop attempted to introduce his teaching in this zone, he was prohibited from doing so. It became necesary, then, to make a special appeal to the emperor of Byzantium as well as to the ecclesiastical head of the church at Byzantium. So Sahak sent Mesrop as his official messenger to the emperor, and in addition wrote an urgent letter to Bishop Addigos, recommending Mesrop to him in endearing terms, saying, "I am sending to you **the teacher of our country**, Mesrop."[1] The winning personality of Mesrop softened the heart of the emperor, who honored him with the title of 'Ecclesiasticus"[2] and gave him his full permission and even his financial support to carry on his educational work in his sphere of influence. Thus Mesrop returned to Armenia "Having in his hands the decree of the emperor and hurried immediately to put in execution his order. Then, sending messengers into the provinces of Armenia, which were under the Byzantine influence, he had groups of children gathered at suitable centers, and these children were pensioned by royal subsidies."[3] In this way Mesrop's educational reforms covered the entire country.

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[1] Cf. Gorioun, p. 17. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Lazar of Pharpi, Book I, p. 11. Translated by the author.

C. **The Duration of Public Education in Armenia.** This system of public education which was instituted by Sahak and Mesrop lasted as long as they lived. It is hardly conceivable that it continued to exist for any considerable time after their deaths. Our assumption is based upon the fact that during the chaotic condition which prevailed in Armenia, no such educational program could be carried out because there was left neither a royal treasury to maintain it, nor willingness on the part of the leaders of Armenia to support it when the very life of the nation was at stake. We see clearly from the common complaints of the second generation of Armenian students returning from abroad, that the whole nation at this time was absorbed in the solution of the weighty problems of state and no particular consideration was being given to education. Moreover, the ignorant reactionaries among the Armenian clergy had seized their golden opportunity to extinguish the glowing light of Hellenism which had flooded Armenia through the efforts of two generations of Armenian students who were steeped in the Alexandrian and Athenian philosophy, to which we shall presently return. Therefore, we are convinced that the second attempt at public education in Armenia unfortunately did not have its full chance, owing to the fatal sequence of adverse conditions which strangled the new movement in its infancy. It is a sorrowful fact that education for the common folk in Armenia did not have its day thereafter until the dawn of a new era of awakening in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[1] Cf. **Moses of Khorene**, Book III, Chapter 57. The italics are ours. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Lazar of Pharpi**, p. 27. Translated by the author.

[3] Cf. **Gorioun**, p. 21. Translated by the author.

D. **The Characteristic Features of the Sahak-Mesropian Schools.**—The most striking feature of these new schools, and their most fundamental difference from those established by Tiridates and St. Gregory, are found in the fact that although they were not only entirely native in their origin, they were the fruition of national efforts, meeting national needs, enhancing national homogeneity, and perpetuating a national culture which had just begun to flourish. Perhaps they were also more widespread throughout the country. Moreover, the product of these schools was of a more enduring nature. A contemporary educator and Armenian author, Leo, gives an apt pen picture of the Sahak-Mesropian school system in the following passage:

"It spread itself in various parts of the country, enclosing in its confines a great multitude of Armenian children.

"What a wonderful scene is offered to us by these schools of the Motherland! Armenia was one of the countries where the population was divided into classes. The ruling and commanding class consisted of the nobility (the princes). The nobility owned the lands, and the great majority of the people belonged to the peasantry and were called peasants and serfs, "not-free," being under the feudal lord. The landed gentry enjoyed the rights, and the great mass of the common folk were compelled to work and be subjected to their lord.

"The Armenian school came to disturb that situation. Everybody had a place in it, from the courtier down to the peasant farmer The latter, thanks to the education that he received, was advancing, reaching to higher stations of life, and was gradually coming to places of leadership. The career of ecclesiastical service was open to him Up to this period, the higher ecclesiastical positions were reserved for a few prominent families. However, beginning with this era, the system of hereditary succession was abolished, and a humble priest of a village had a chance to manipulate even the fate of the nation itself, provided that he was endowed with intellectual capacity.

"In the schools of Sahak and Mesrop, the Armenian woman first made her appearance, and she was being initiated to occupy her place of honor in community movements."[1]

In evaluating the importance of the educational activity of Sahak and Mesrop, one should constantly keep in mind the qualitative rather than the quantitative value of their work. True, the schools they established died out after a short period of life, but as long as they lived they manifested a marvelous intensity of life. No greater zeal for intellectual attainment was shown at any period in the history of Armenia than during that short space of time! There is evident everywhere, yearning enthusiasm for progress, unalloyed devotion to lofty ideals and aspirations, and spontaneous willingness for service on the part of all the leaders of the Golden Age!

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[1] Cf. The Jubilee of the Armenian Book, in Armenian, by Leo, pp. 32-34. Translated by the author.

E. **The Curriculum.**—1. As did the leaders of the early Christian schools, Sahak and Mesrop aimed, above all, at teaching the Scriptures to their pupils. This fact is everywhere emphasized in the sources. Gorioun mentions that they taught "The works of the Fathers of the Church with great profoundness."[1] And again, "He assembled classes of pupils in different sections, and at various places in the provinces, so that they might learn the Truth."[2] We have already had occasion to notice that Gorioun characterized the central school at Vagharshabad as **The Fountainhead of the Knowledge of God.** Moses of Khorene compares the work of Mesrop with that of the apostles, implying thereby that the sole motive inspiring the great teacher of all Armenia was a religious and Christian one. Furthermore, the fact that all the graduates of these schools on various occasions manifested a profound knowledge of the Scriptures is another evidence that the teaching of the Bible was intensely emphasized in the curriculum. Not even the princes were ignorant of the Scriptures. On a great many occasions, which are minutely described by Father Elisoeus as well as by the other authors of the period, they manifested a deep knowledge of the prophets and apostles, quoting copiously from the Scriptures to emphasize their plea before the Persian king in defence of Christianity. Even noble women knew something of the Bible and read it very fervently, according to Elisoeus. In short, it is a striking feature of Armenian education that from its outset it has been permeated with an intense religious spirit and has remained so until the period of secularization which took place after the middle of the nineteenth century.

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[1] Cf. Gorioun, p. 29. Translated by the author.
[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 23. Translated by the author.

2. Beside the Scriptures the Armenian language and literature was stressed in these schools. As we noticed even prior to the invention of the alphabet, the Armenian language had reached a marked degree of perfection and refinement. Sahak and Mesrop translated the Bible into one of the most refined and influential Armenian dialects—one which was spoken by a majority of the people and understood by all. Moses of Khorene[1] makes a special mention of this fact, saying that he wished to write his history in the common speech of the common people. His work, however, with the other literary products of the Golden Age, represents the highly classical and beautiful model of ancient Armenian. It is doubtful whether any literary masterpiece in Armenian can excel in clearness and refinement of idiomatic expression the language of the Bible, translated chiefly by Sahak, with the assistance of Mesrop, Ohan Yegaghetzatzi (Joannes Ecelensis), Joseph of Baghni (Josephus Palnensis), and Eznik of Gulpi. The main textbooks used in teaching the Armenian language were the newly translated Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers. Even up to recent times, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Psalms constituted the chief textbook for the Armenian students. It is self-evident that the emphasis placed upon the Armenian language

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[1] Cf. Moses of Khorene, Book III, A.

in these schools distinguishes them from the early Christian schools. In this way education had become national in character as it was Christian in spirit. Lazar of Pharpi emphasizes this fact when he says, "Everybody was encouraged, and desired to acquire the knowledge of the Armenian language. They were happy in being set free into the open light from the darkness of the toilsome task encountered in learning the Syriac."[1]

3. Grammar. There are evidences pointing to the fact that the teaching of grammar and rhetoric had a place in these schools. Sahak personally was a profound scholar in Grammar. "The main profession of St. Sahak was the science of Grammar, in which he was more advanced than many people of his age and more than the Greek savants."[2] And again, "Sahak was the originator of the rules concerning grammar, formation of words, and etymology."[3] Other evidence which affirms the same fact is mentioned by Moses of Khorene, who calls Sahak a New Plato, referring to the fact that he was a representative of the Alexandrian school of Neo-Platonism. His particular statement is as follows:

"I came to learn the force of the various shades of meaning from the new Plato, I mean from my master, not deserving to be his pupil."[4] It is a known fact that it was in the Alexandrian school that the linguistic laws were formulated. And most of the "Tarkmanitches," as the Armenian students were called who studied abroad, went to Alexandria by preference. Undoubtedly, upon their return, they introduced the science of Grammar in the Armenian schools in which they taught. We have another bit of evidence in the fact that the famous grammar of Dionysius of Thracis[1] was translated into classical Armenian. "I believe that the Grammar of Dionysius was translated into Armenian prior to the first half of the fifth century. This is proved by the fact that all the Armenian names mentioned in them are those of the Golden Age, such as Manedj, Ardag, Papken, Gorioun, Mashdotz, etc. It was not a literal translation but a free one, an adaptation to the Armenian language, which indicates that it was intended for the use of the Armenians, and more especially for use in schools. The interpretations of the same grammar book are written later by David the Invincible, Moses the Poet, etc. (Zarphanelian, "History of Literature," pp. 322-387.)"[2]

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[1] Cf. **Lazar of Pharpi**, Book I, p. 10. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Pazmaveb**, June 1927, H. K. G. Translated by the author.

[3] Cf. **Ibid.** Translated by the author.

[4] Cf. **Moses of Khorene**, Book III, Chapter 62. Translated by the author.

4. Writing and copying were also taught in these schools. The graduates have manifested a marvelous zeal for literary activity. It is natural, therefore, to expect that they were trained also in the arts of writing and copying manuscripts. Gorioun[3] mentions the fact that Mesrop translated and wrote in his own hand the Proverbs of Solomon, teaching his pupils to write in the same way.

5. Rhetoric was another subject in the curricu-

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[1] Cf. Dionisii Thracis, Ars Gramatica.

[2] Cf. Education among the Ancient Armenians, in Armenian, p. 112, by Hatzouni. Translated by the author.

[3] Cf. Gorioun, p. 20.

lum. Gorioun,[1] relating the evangelical and educational work of Mesrop among the Medes, describes their morals and customs in a very derogatory manner, adding that they were unable to master their gabbling gibberish. But with the training they received at the hands of Mesrop they became clear-speaking rhetoricians, and were educated in the wisdom of God. Bishop Papken Gulesserian, in a private letter written to the author on January 9, 1928, recommends very highly the reading of "The Philosophical Definitions," ascribed to David the Invincible, which constituted the Grammar of the Trivium, as well as "The Book of Essentials," ascribed to Moses of Khorene, which represents the Rhetoric, in the classical division of the subjects of the curriculum. We shall have occasion in the chapter on Hellenism to discuss at greater length the philosophical works of David the Invincible. These books have been used as textbooks in the higher schools of Armenia. In the same letter, Bishop Gulesserian states that in our schools only the subjects of the Trivium (Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectic) were taught. The evidences testifying to the inclusion of the subjects classified in the Quadrivium, in the schools of ancient Armenia are very scanty and faint, which indicates that the Armenian youth studied the subjects of the Quadrivium abroad, in the schools of Greece and Rome. But there are many evidences affirming the fact that Rhetoric was a favorite subject in the schools of Armenia. One of the products of the Sahak-Mesropian schools was Mantagooni, who attained a prominent position in Rhetoric and who left a series of discourses, which are specimens of rhetorical excellence.

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 21.

6. There is no doubt that the students were also taught sacred music. Armenian literature is replete with inspired hymns of real poetical value. They were chanted in the churches by choirs of young singers as well as by the clergymen themselves. In the passage quoted above from Moses of Khorene we noticed that students were selected from young men who were "intelligent," "well-fed," "sweet-voiced," and "with enduring voices," which means that they were to learn how to sing at least the holy hymns of the church.

7. That dialectic or logic was included in the curriculum is borne out by the fact that the products of the Sahak-Mesropian schools were capable logicians, debaters, and defenders of Christianity. On most occasions they had the upper hand in a heated argument because they had mastered the art of dialectics and were able to quote instantly either from the Scriptures or from the works of the Church Fathers.

III **Evangelical Activities of Mesrop.**—All the primary sources at our command are unanimous in praising Sahak and Mesrop for their untiring efforts in evangelizing, educating, and civilizing the neighboring nations, secluded in the mountain recesses, as well as in the plains of the Caucasus. No better proof can be found of the lofty idealism and Christian spirit of brotherhood among the leaders of the Golden Age than the fact that after evangelizing and civilizing the Armenian nation, they immediately hastened to carry the messages of the Gospel and the blessings of education to three distinct races of the Caucasus. The first people that Mesrop evangelized were the Karkarks, a small racial group dwelling in the regions of the Caucasus. The second race which he evangelized and educated were the Georgians, who at the present time have an independent and flourishing republic in the Caucasus. Moses of Khorene[1] as well as Gorioun[2] relate in some detail how Mesrop went to Georgia, won to his way of thinking their king, Pagoor, and their bishop, Moses, and employing a Georgian, Zagha by name, as his interpreter and assistant, first invented an alphabet[3] for them, then organized schools for the education of Georgian children, dividing them into two classes and appointing as instructors two of his former pupils, Der Khortzenatzi and Mooshe of Daron.

From Georgia, Mesrop hurried into the confines of Albania[4], in eastern Caucasus. He appealed to their king, Arsvaghen, and their bishop, Eremia, who entrusted to his care select children. And using an Albanian, Benjamin by name, as his interpreter, he invented an alphabet to express the particular sounds of their language, translated the Bible into their native tongue, and educated them, appointing as instructor to them one of his pupils, Jonathan. In a short time they were conversant with the Scriptures.

The contributions of Mesrop to the evangelization and education of the neighboring peoples of the Caucasus stand forth as a high tribute to the greatness of his soul and the keenness of his genius. He was a dynamic personality, constantly doing something worth while, achieving great things, always teaching, preaching, evangelizing, and civilizing. He was the master organizer and administrator of the schools which were newly established and "used to tour all the provinces where schools were founded, with the purpose of stimulating, reconstructing, and solidifying them on firmer ground."[1]

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[1] Cf. Moses of Khorene, p. 522.

[2] Cf. Gorioun, p. 25.

[3] The Georgians have two alphabets. One called Khootzoori, resembles the Armenian alphabet; the other, called Mechetrooli, resembles the Pehlavi alphabet. This is used in ordinary printing.

[4] Cf. Moses of Khorene, p. 523 and also Gorioun, p. 31.

IV. **Armenian Students Abroad.**—The limits of this chapter do not permit us to describe fully the student migrations into the various centers of Hellenic culture, the enthusiasm they displayed in pursuing their higher studies, and the capacity they manifested in acquiring the truths they came in contact with at the schools of Alexandria, Byzantium, and Athens. The Armenian historians of the period give us only the names of those who were the most prominent, and who achieved success chiefly in literary productions. There are thirty-one names mentioned specifically, sixteen of which belong to the Senior "Tarkmanitch" group, the first generation of students; eight are considered to belong to the Junior "Tarkmanitch" group; and the rest remain unclassified. There were, no doubt, many others whose names have not been mentioned by the historians of the period. Most of them were educated in the schools of Alexandria,[2] and some at Athens. Upon their return to Armenia they proudly called themselves Athenians.

What they studied during their sojourn abroad is not specifically mentioned by the Golden Age chroniclers. But we can arrive at a definite opinion in this respect by evaluating the literary achievements of the "Tarkmanitches." It is a well known historical fact, that the Alexandrian[1] school burst forth into prominence in the reign of Ptolemy Soter (323-285 B. C.). It was at Alexandria that a great number of books were collected in a splendid library, and a museum and an academy of science were founded. The school's work has been divided into two periods, the first period extending from 306 B. C. to A. D. 30, and the second period from A. D. 30 to A. D. 642, when Alexandria was destroyed by the Arabs. We are specially interested in the second period, when speculative philosophy was at its height in this school. Great masters like Philo, Plotinus, Clement, Origen, and Porphyry added lustre to the Alexandrian school. Here Neo-Platonism as an idealistic philosophy was in full bloom. Here the mysticism of Neo-Platonism was combined with the practical spirit of Christianity. Here East and West met and their respective thoughts were amalgamated. In short, here Neo-Platonism as the philosophy of revelation gave its influential support to the doctrines of Christianity. And it was here that Christianity learned that "God is spirit." These philosophical doctrines traveled into Cappadocia and later into Athens.

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[1] Cf. **Gorioun**, p. 26. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **L'Ecole d'Alexandrie**, by Jule Simon, for a scholarly discussion of this school, also **Die Dogmengeschichte** by Harnack, and for a concise discussion, **Cyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, by Hastings.

The Armenian students came in personal contact with the great masters of these Greek schools. We saw that Sahak, one of the chief originators of the Golden Age culture, was called New Plato by Moses of Khorene. And the literary works of the Armenian students of the Golden Age abound in numerous evidences to show that they were conversant with the existing philosophy of the period. David the Invincible wrote commentaries upon the work of Porphyry, one of the masters of the Alexandrian school. He also wrote "Definitions of Philosophy," which is an attempt to harmonize the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. It is known that the prominent masters in the school at Alexandria did the same. Besides philosophical knowledge the Armenian students mastered the doctrines of the Christian Fathers. For instance, the works of St. John Crysostom were translated into Armenian by the students of the Golden Age.

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[1] Cf. **L'Ecole d'Alexandrie**, by Jule Simon, for a scholarly discussion of this school, also **Die Dogmengeschichte** by Harnack, and for a concise discussion, **Cyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, by Hastings.

CHAPTER VII

Hellenism Among the Armenians

What has been the influence of pagan Hellenic culture upon Armenia cannot be determined clearly owing to lack of sources. As we have already noticed, the Armenian literature of the pre-Christian era is lost in some mysterious way and only a few fragmentary gems of epic poetry are preserved. Whether this was due to the lack of an Armenian alphabet or to the over-zealous persecution and hatred shown to the pagan literature by the new converts to Christianity, no one is able to decide. The fact is that for the pre-Christian history of Armenia we have to depend upon the meager information or casual remarks of the Greek and Roman writers or upon the revelations of the Persian, Assyrian and Vannic (Khaldian) cuneiform inscriptions recently deciphered.

I. **Hellenism before the Christian Era.**—There is no doubt whatever that the Armenians were in close contact with Hellenic culture by reason of their racial origin, already discussed in the introductory chapter, and also because they were living in a country contiguous to the Greek colonial settlements on the shores of the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Furthermore, the conquests of Alexander the Great brought the Armenians into direct relationship with the Hellenic world, and even after their emancipation from the dominion of the Seleucids, the Arsacids, the ruling dynasty of Armenia, were very friendly toward the Greeks. We know that the Arsacids coined their money with Greek inscriptions on them. Plutarch tells us that Tigranes the Great, the most distinguished representative of the Arsacid dynasty, had transplanted Greek actors into his newly constructed capital city, where Greek theaters were also built. Ardavastes,[1] another Armenian king, during the days of his captivitiy at the court of Cleopatra, in Egypt, wrote Greek tragedies of excellence. Then, Armenians came in close contact and even political alliance with the Roman empire and kept up their interest especially in the Romanized Greek culture. "Roman civilization advanced in Armenia with rapid strides, especially after the conciliation with Augustus (63 B. C.-A. D. 14), when Armenia began to co-operate with the Empire as an ally, and the Roman Senate endeavored thereafter to help preserve the unity of the Armenian state, often waging war with the Parthians (of Persia) and with the Persians, to this end. From that date on the Armenian kings and princes sent their children to Rome as hostages or simply for the sake of educating them there. Tacitus (A. D. 55-120) mentions a large number of these Armenian young men in his "Annals" (Tacitus, the "Annals," Book XII)."[2]

That Armenians showed an unusual zeal in the study of Hellenism and even produced a few ardent devotees to it of international fame, offers further evidence of the widespread character of Hellenic culture, at least among the higher circles of society. The case of Diran Haigazn proves this fact.

Diran Haigazn was a pupil of Dionysius, the grammarian. Lucullus admired his scholarship and personality and took him to Rome, where his reputation attracted attention. He was the first man to inaugurate book-selling as a business, and organized a library.

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[1] Cf. Plutarch, Lives, Crassus, p. 506.

[2] Cf. St. Mesrop and the Armenian Golden Age, in Armenian, by H. K. V. N., p. 35, Venice, St. Lazare. Translated by the author.

Cicero, (106-43 B. C.), appreciating the abilities of Diran, invited him to his house to arrange his books for him. Diran was not only a scholarly grammarian but a great rhetorician and teacher. "Cicero appreciated the work of Diran so much that he organized a school in his home where Diran taught grammar and where Roman children came to study literary arts."[1]

II. **Hellenism after the Introduction of Christianity.**—We have abundant evidence to show that after the introduction of Christianity into Armenia, especially up to the close of the fifth century, Armenians became ardent devotees of Hellenism. Of course, although this type of Hellenism did not exclude the works of Plato, Aristotle, and other great philosophers of the Athenian period, it was deeply tinged with religious colors. It was the Hellenism of the Alexandrian and Athenian schools which rendered Christianitiy philosophical and philosophy Christian. The devotion of the Armenian students to Hellenism was so boundless that the Persian kings, and under their urgent demands even the Armenian princes[2] forbade the teaching of the Greek language and culture in the confines of Major Armenia, in the zone of the Persian influence. We know also from the testimonies of the Greek Fathers that Armenian students flocked into the centers of Hellenic culture and in some instances excelled their Greek fellow-students. "The competition of the Armenian youth with the Greek students and sometimes their victory over them is made evident by the oration of Gregory of Nazianze at the funeral of St. Basil (The Discourse of St. Nazaianze). In this oration he complains about the sophistry of some of them, but mentions also some friends who had ties of intimate friendship with St. Basil and among these were the most prominent ones, St. Nerses and Vartanig, the latter the natural child of King Bab."[2]

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[1] Cf. Pazmaveb, H. K. N., p. 171, (June, 1927, No. 6). Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Moses of Khorene, Book III, XXXVI, "Meroujan". Translated by the author.

Not only did the Armenians absorb the Hellenism of this period but they also gave to the world a few leaders and teachers in Hellenism who inspired the youth everywhere with their masterly scholarship and intense earnestness. Among these, a few names are worthy of our consideration.

Broyeresius, or, as he is known in Armenian, Barouyr Haigazn, was an excellent Hellenist, rhetorician, teacher, and orator, whose fame was echoed not only in Greece but in Gaul and Rome as well. The Roman senate appreciated so highly the oration which he delivered before the senate about the greatness of Rome that a bronze statue was erected in his honor, with the following inscription: "Regina Rerum Roma, Regi eloquentiae." (Queen Rome to the King of eloquence.)

Broyeresius lived during the fourth century. The best information about him is obtainable from

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[1] Cf. The Golden Age of Armenia, by H. K. V. N., p. 36.

Eunabius,[1] who lived during the same time. According to Eunabius, Broyeresius went first to Antioch to study rhetoric under Ulbianus, who had a school there. Then he hurried to the schools of Athens where he won fame as a scholar. His teacher was Julius of Capadocia, who thought a great deal of his pupil. When this teacher left Athens, many scholars tried to occupy his vacant chair. Among these were Broyeresius, Hepesdion, and Ebiphanus.

Students came to study under Broyeresius from all the civilized world, from Pontus, Bithynia, Hellespont, Lycia, Pamphylia. His rivals became jealous of him and intrigued the ruler of Athens to remove Broyeresius from his chair. After a time he came back to Athens when a new ruler was in control. Broyeresius invited all his rivals to a forensic competition. He was signally victorious. Then Emperor Constantine invited him first tō Gaul and afterwards to Rome, where he taught for a time and delivered his famous speech before the Senate. His ability as a great master and orator was unsurpassed, so that even Emperor Julius, who was a rhetorician himself and very conscious of his own ability wrote to him in a letter: "Hominem ita in diciendo copiosum it abundantem, ut flumina cum in patente campo influunt; hominem aemulantem eloquentia Periclem."[2]

Broyeresius died at the age of ninety-five after having trained many famous rhetoricians and Hellenists.

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[1] We gather our information from Zarphanelian's History of Armenian Literature, a most scholarly and excellent book in Armenian.

[2] Cf. Zarphanelian, History of Armenian Literature, p. 262
". . A man who was as copious and abundant in his speech as rivers which extend themselves in a field unobstructed, a man who could rival Pericles in eloquence." Translated by the author.

Two of the most distinguished pupils of Broyeresius won international fame as Fathers of the old Greek church, St. Basil the Great of Cappadocia, and St. Gregory the Theologian.

We had occasion to observe that the early leaders of Christianity in Armenia were mostly the representatives of the Greek Cappadocian school, as for example were Gregory the Illuminator, Virtanes and Arisdakes, the two sons of St. Gregory, as well as Nerses the Great.

But the spread of Hellenism reached its culmination during the Golden Age of Armenian culture. Sahak was a thoroughly trained Hellenist; so was Mesrop; and the two major groups of the "Tarkmanitches," altogether sixty in number, were educated in the Hellenic centers of Alexandria, Athens and Byzantium. Therefore, upon their return to Armenia, they must have introduced the best elements of the Hellenism of the period. So they did. We shall not mention all their achievements, neither shall we mention the names of all the great Hellenists. We shall delineate very briefly the nature of the work and contributions of only four of the most distinguished Hellenists, products of the Golden Age.

Eznik of Gulpi was one of the most scholarly representatives of the first group of Armenian students sent abroad. He was a master in the Greek, Syrian, and Persian languages, and aided St. Sahak in the translation of the Bible. He was also the author of a masterpiece in Armenian, excellent both from the standpoint of language and depth of thought. In this work, "The Refutation of Sects," he makes a comparative study of various sects, both Christian and pagan, in which he gives evidence of his profound knowledge in natural sciences, mathematics, philosophy and theology.

Moses of Khorene.—The reader of the preceding chapters has already become familiar with this name. He belonged to the group of the second generation of Armenian students sent to Hellenic schools. He journeyed to Byzantium, Athens, Rome, Antioch, Palestine, and Alexandria. He studied rhetoric and was an accomplished orator. Emperor Margianus, admiring his ability, said to him, "The words of your mouth are chosen in the eyes of all; you are the first among the orators."[1] After a long sojourn in the Hellenic world, he returned to Armenia, where all was in ruins, and where Persian influence was oppressing the Armenian intellectual flight. He took refuge with his classmate, Keud, another Hellenist, who was the Katholikos of all Armenia. He was ordained bishop in spite of his protests, and opened schools in Pakrevant and in the realm of Arsharounik, and educated the Armenian youth. It was here that he wrote his famous book on Armenian history, which in spite of its apparent defects was comprehensive in nature, and won for him the immortal title of "The Father of Armenian History."

An interpretation of the Grammar is also ascribed to his authorship, a book which served as a textbook for Armenian youth.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, by Zarphanelian, p. 351. Translated by the author.

Lazar of Pharpi is another representative of the second generation of students who were the products of the Golden Age. He lived during the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth centuries. He completed his education in Hellenic centers and became a master rhetorician and orator

When Vahan Mamikonian became the Marzban or governor of Armenia, he appointed Lazar superintendent over the cathedral church and the monastery. The latter introduced various reforms there, and many students from different sections of Armenia came to study there, attracted by his reputation. But ignorant vartabets of that monastery became jealous of him, slandered him, accused him as a heretic, and finally expelled him from the monastery. In his famous letter to Vahan Mamikonian, which is an excellent source of information for the social and intellectual conditions of his time, he defends himself vehemently and indicates that there was a reaction against Hellenism and a reign of ignorance among the brethren of the monastery. "Would that those who still stay in the monastery read my writings and thus become enlightened and also enlighten others, and do not permit my books to be eaten by moths."[1] The fact that Lazar of Pharpi counter-accuses his adversaries in bitter terms and describes them as ignoramuses and brutish people indicates that there was a certain amount of hostility between the members and their superior. This was probably due to a growing hostility against Hellenism among the conservative members, who had witnessed with bitter resentment the indifference of the Byzantine emperors at the critical moment of Armenia's struggle for life with the pagan Persian hordes. This hostility to Hellenism reached its climax after the convening of the Council of Chalcedon[1] (A. D. 451), in which Armenia did not participate and for which the Armenians were persecuted ever after by the Greek church, falsely charged with being adherents of Nestor and Eutiches. The failure of the Armenians to join this ecumenical council after taking part in all three universal councils of the early Christian church was due to Armenia's disillusionment and to the shattering of a cherished dream of a universal Christian brotherhood. For the Armenians saw clearly, at the critical hour of the battle of Avarayr, against the Persians, that the dream of a Christian brotherhood of helpfulness was a vain illusion, so far as political and military considerations were concerned.

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[1] Cf. Lazar of Pharpi, p. vii, translated from ancient Armenian into modern by Der Minas Der Bedrosiantz, Alexandrabol. Translated into English by the author.

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[1] The breach between the Armenians and the Greeks has a long history. Religious controversies and political strife continued between them for centuries. It is unfortunate that these two nations did not show a united front against the onslaughts of the Asiatic barbarian hordes. True, there were short intervals of peace between the two nations, and Armenia even furnished several capable emperors of Armenian origin to the throne of the Byzantine empire, and through the personal influence of these emperors at times some sort of conciliation was established. But all these efforts were of no avail in the face of religious controversies.

The Armenians did not participate in the Council of Chalcedon (A. D. 551) because they were fighting for their very existence, especially for their religious freedom, with the Persian Sassanids, who endeavored to convert the Armenians to Mazdaism. During this critical period Rome and Constantinople were carrying on a war of rivalry for ecclesiastical supremacy in the council chambers of Chalcedon. It was a tumultuous council in which "party feeling ran high and scurrilous and vulgar epithets were bandied." (**Encyclopaedia Brittanica**, Eleventh Edition, Vol. 5-6, pp. 802-803). It was in this council that the heresies of Nestorianism and Eutychianism were rejected. The Armenians did not adhere to the heresies of Nestor and Eutyches, but in a national council at Valarshapat (A. D. 491) condemned the council of Chalcedon and in this condemnation the Georgians and Albanians joined also. However, at the council of Shirakavan (A. D. 862) the Armenians accepted the decrees of Chalcedon and made peace with the Greeks. For a detailed account Cf. **Cyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, Vol. I, p. 804, by Hastings, article on **Armenia, (Christian).**

The question of the acceptance of the decrees of the council of Chalcedon by Armenians is a controversial question.

However, before tracing the character of Hellenism in Armenia after the Council of Chalcedon, it is imperative to introduce to the reader one of the most celebrated Armenian representatives of Hellenism, whose literary works exist both in Greek and Armenian and in this way throw much light upon various problems of Aristotelian and other Greek texts, elucidating, clarifying, and supplementing them.

David the Invincible was an Armenian philosopher of the first rank, whose title of honor was accorded him by his contemporaries to commemorate the fact that he was an excellent philosopher, devoted to the study of Hellenism, and that he had won many victories in Athens during his disputations and argumentations with Greek scholars.

Like Moses and Lazar, David belongs to the second generation of the Armenian students sent to Hellenic centers during the Golden Age, and is alleged to be a nephew of the first. He studied especially at the school of Alexandria, Byzantium, and Athens. Upon his return to Armenia he was saddened to see the chaotic conditions brought about by political turmoil and had to retire in a monastery of St. Lazar, in Taron, where he died. His sepulchre, fixed by tradition, has become ever since a place of pilgrimage for those who aspire to become philosophers and orators.

Professor F. C. Conybeare, of Oxford, in an excellent work in which he compares the translations and original writings of David with corresponding Greek texts, quotes a very interesting passage from the preface of an old Armenian manuscript, "Kirk Eagatz," which he found in the Etchmiatzin collection of manuscripts, and in this passage we find an illuminating description of David's work and career.

"David the Invincible, who is called philosopher, was one of the five Armenian students who, at the beginning of the fifth century, went to Constantinople upon invitation of Theodosius in order to learn Greek and to translate the Bible into Armenian. He was accompanied by Moses the Poet, Mampre the Philosopher, Apraham the Orator, and Paul. After a short period of schooling in Constantinople, the Greek emperor sent David back to Armenia, his motherland, so that he would superintend the fortification of Karni, near Erivan, a strong fortress which, according to Tacitus, was besieged by the Romans and was reconstructed during the preceding century by Tiridates. Returning once more to Constantinople, David again begged the king to be sent to Athens for studying. His request was accepted and he, as well as his classmates, was placed under the patronage and protection of the emperor. Owing to a gross chronological error, it is sometimes stated that he was a classmate of Basil of Caesarea, and also that of the two Gregorys, Gregory of Nysse, and his brother, Gregory of Nazianze, the Theologian. David was invited to occupy the principal chair of philosophy at Athens. After the Council of Ephesus (A. D. 431), the emperor sent him again to his motherland with many gifts . . . . and armed with several books, which they had translated into their mother tongue during their stay in Greece, they returned to Armenia and found their compatriots engaged in a deadly struggle against the court of Hasigert of Persia, in which fight Vartan fell. This event took place in A. D. 451, twenty years after the Council of Ephesus. The writer continues and tells that Moses and David tried not to make conspicuous their presence in Armenia because they were Athenians and were of old age and Armenia lay in ruins. Moses disguised himself in the garb of a beggar and retired in a village in the plains, but his companions, David and Paul, went as far as Erivan where they were honored with a hearty welcome by the Katholikos, Keud, an old classmate of Moses. In this way better days were reserved for Moses also. They searched for him, found him, and against his protests, that he was almost a stranger after having lived so many years at Hellata, he was ordained an archbishop. He immediately began to write his "History of Armenia" and his "Interpretations of the Grammar," and also a hymnal for use in the churches. Evidently he was prohibited from teaching his compatriots during those political hard times. And David wrote his "Philosophical Definitions (Prolegomena Philosophica) and also his "Interpretations of the Grammar," and both of them opened their treasures which they had been storing up for so long a time."[1]

Besides the authorship of this aforementioned book on philosophy, which is written to refute the false doctrines of Pyrrho, a Greek philosopher who advocated that everything should be doubted, David also translated Aristotle's "Categories," (Grammar), Aristotle's "Physical Geography," and Aristotle's "Treatise on Virtue," and fourteen chapters of Aristotle's "Logic." He claims also the credit for the translation and authorship of "Interpretations of Porphyry"[2] and his own analysis of this latter book. We shall briefly examine these philosophical works, which have popularized Hellenism in Armenia not only at this period but throughout the middle ages and served as textbooks for succeeding generations of Armenians.

Philosophical Definitions was written with the purpose of refuting Pyrrho's doctrines of scepticism.

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[1] Cf. On David the Invincible, Conybeare, the Armenian translation by H. H. Dashian, p. 20. Translated into English by the author.

[2] Both of these valuable books are contained in a manuscript copy made in Byzantium in 1756 by a Sarkis Vartabet. This manuscript is in the library of the author of this dissertation.

David manifests a profound knowledge of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Porphyry, etc. He tries to harmonize the different doctrines of these Greek philosophers to support Christianity with Greek philosophy. He writes very logically and clearly although his Armenian not only does not show the clearness and beauty of the classical writers but is a specimen of a very much complicated and Hellenized Armenian. He wrote his books in Armenian words but they were Greek in their sentence structure and idiomatic expressions. This accounts for the fact that it is difficult at times to find the precise meaning of some of his sentences. However, Vilfrois, who probably judges him by his Greek writings, praises his work very highly. "Perhaps it will appear to some that David slavishly follows Plato or Aristotle. It is not so, because he knows how to choose and compare the ideas of both. He knows how to refute firmly the opinions which appear to him to be false. The style of his writing is very excellent. He begins in a clear-cut fashion and advances in a systematic and select style of writing. He expresses his ideas with such clearness that it strikes the reader with wonder and admiration."[1] I shall quote a few characteristic passages from this book.

Like Plato he exalts the importance of virtue in the life of a philosopher, when he says, "As Plato explains, I call philosopher not him who knows much, and who is capable of learning by heart many things, but one who lives an impeccable and clean life. For he is a perfect philosopher who knows how to curb his appetites."[1]

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, by Zarphanelian, p. 323. Translated by the author.

These lines were hurled at Pyrrho, who denied the existence of truth:

"If there is God, there is also wisdom, philosophy. Yes, there is God, and if there is God, there is also Providence, because God not only creates but takes care of his creatures. If there is Providence, there is also wisdom, philosophy, because Providence provides not unwisely but wisely. And if there is philosophy, there is also a desire for philosophy."[2]

"Just as God takes care of all things, in the same manner the philosopher takes care of imperfect souls, bringing them to a complete knowledge. Just as God knows everything the perfect philosopher promises to know everything, and knows the useful things."[3]

"Virtue is supreme happiness and the mother of philosophy is virtue, for from the hands of virtue we receive wisdom, philosophy . . . . and the happiest person, namely, the one who lives by virtue, does not grow sad, not only over the physical temptations and ills, but also not over the external ones, namely the losses of wealth."[4]

Here is a passage from the "Analysis of the Interpretations of Porphyry":

"Admiration is the beginning of wisdom (philosophy). That admiration is the beginning of wisdom is known by the fact that when one does not admire, one does not have either, any interest, and therefore one does not philosophize. If, for example, when seeing the rainbow one does not admire it and inquire of himself as to the nature of it and also as to the blending of the various colors and shades, he does not show any interest. But if he admires, he shows an interest and therefore attempts to philosophize."[5]

Even from these fragmentary passages one forms an opinion of the character of Hellenism as it prevailed in the schools of the Golden Age. The Armenian students had completely absorbed the Greek thought of the period. But through their writings they unconsciously served a double purpose, the one to enlighten their compatriots, the other to supplement some of the Hellenic texts which have been lost in the original, but were fortunately preserved in the Armenian translation. Professor Conybeare points to this fact especially in the case of David's works, the following words:

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[1] Cf. Philosophical Definitions of David the Invincible, p. 209. Published by Mechitarists. Translated by the author.

[2] [3] [4] Cf. Ibid, pp. 131, 144, 162 respectively.

[5] In Book V of the manuscript copy in author's library.

> "If one attempts to edit a critical edition of the Greek manuscripts, it is necessary to use the Armenian translation of David as a source . . . because the Armenian interpretation (Aristotle's works) has the character of a complete work in itself, with the exception of the faulty parts, and it represents a complete literal translation from the Greek. . . . With the help of the Armenian copy one can delineate precisely the true character of an original copy of this work as if it were reproducing the copy of the fourth century, so clearly, so accurately, that one might think to possess actually a manuscript written during the fourth century."[1]

III. Hellenism after the Council of Chalcedon (A. D. 451).—After the historical breach that came about between the two ancient churches of Greece and Armenia, the popularity of Hellenism suffered a great deal. We observed that during the Golden Age and even previous to that period almost all of Armenia was permeated by the spirit of Hellenism, but during the Middle Ages the light of Hellenism glimmered only at isolated places and from isolated individuals. During the first part of the eighth century it appears that Stepanos of Sunik had written an interpretation of the grammar of Dionysius. There are evidences also that he had studied the philosophical works of David the Invincible. Although several minor students of Hellenism are found here and there, it is not before the eleventh century that we again meet a highly respectable representative of Hellenism in Aremnia. This person is none other than **Gregory Magistros**, who translated two books from Plato and other Greek philosophers, and who was the author of a book of letters, in which one can see clearly how profoundly he was imbued with Hellenism. The letter which he wrote to two of his pupils, Parsegh and Elisoeus, has the character of a lecture addressed to his pupils, in which he instructs them what to read and study. It is worth while to give the high points of this letter:

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[1] Cf. Conybeare, On David the Invincible, in Armenian translation by Father H. H. Dashian, p. 69. Translated by the author.

> "I hear that you came in possession of Aristotle's works. If you have it, send it to me, because it is necessary to study Grammar thoroughly and after that rhetoric with its three divisions and then the definitions, and before studying these, one has to study the Old and New Testaments, and one can study with discretion Homer, Plato, and other works. A philosopher demonstrates his knowledge by knowing the four arts, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy.
>
> "If Aristotle's work which you have in your possession is the one which deals with the heavenly bodies and the roundness of the earth and the laws of life and in which the divisions of diseases are discussed, send it to me.
>
> "But if it is Porphyry, you do not need to send it to me because I have met this work early in my life, when I was young. But I consider the highest task of my life to study those collections which deal with the four arts."[1]

This letter alone indicates that there were at least a few people in Armenia who studied even during the eleventh century the work of David the Invincible, Plato, and Aristotle, and expressed real yearning to study also Homer and other classical authors.

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[1] Cf. Letters of Gregory Magistros, in ancient Armenian, Letter 45, p. 105. Translated by the author.

Another significant fact regarding Gregory Magistros is that he did not belong to the Armenian clergy, being an excellent representative of the Armenian house of princes, called Bahlavooni, who served the nation for about three centuries with their benevolences.

Gregory Magistros was brought up in Ani, capital of the Pagratid dynasty, under the best influences, and in the splendid atmosphere of that period. During his time the church had many luminaries and highly educated dignitaries. It was during the reign of John Sembat (1020-1041) that Magistros made his contributions to Armenian education and literature. He patronized a great many monasteries, rebuilt them, and endowed them. The period of greatest activity in the construction of monasteries was between 950 and 1050. "He, like the old philosophers, had his peripatetic school, and his pupils and subjects of study and lectures. Among his pupils our attention is called to the Parsegh and Elisoeus, bishops, and Sarkis Vartabet, the superior of the monastery of St. Lazar, and his son, Vahram. He has written rebukes to indolent pupils and in general to those who are lazy in studying. He has edited an "Interpretation of Grammar," and most of his letters are like lectures. He has made several translations also."[1]

Nerses the Gracious, another scion of the illustrious Bahlavooni princes, praises the work of his grandfather in a fine verse, a free translation of which follows:

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[1] Cf. The Letters of Gregory Magistros, edited with a preface by G. Gonstantiantz, p. xxxv.

> "He had versified like Homer;
> He had orated like Plato;
> He was steeped in Hellenism."

Gregory Magistros visited Constantinople also, and was appreciated by Constantine Monomachus (1042-1054). He was appointed Duke of Taron by the Emperor and continued his educational work in the monastery of St. Lazar. He died in 1058, leaving behind him a glorious reputation in Hellenism.

Of course, thereafter, even up to the most recent times, we still find Armenian representatives of Hellenism, for instance, Gregory the Youth, Ohan Otznetzi, Nerses of Lampron, and others, but the interest in Hellenism waned in Armenia especially after the accession to the throne of the Rupenian dynasty, the long lines of Lusignans, a French house of nobility. It was natural that Latin and the old French would hold the center of interest for the Armenian intellectuals of that time.

The Effects of Hellenism.—The study of Hellenism contributed highly to the development of Armenian culture, although some devotees of it tried to mould the Armenian language according to the grammatical and synthetic structure of the Greek. But these extremists were few in number and did not exert a lasting influence upon the Armenian language and literature. In evaluating the case of Hellenism, long cherished in Armenia, Professor N. Marr, a Russian scholar and a student of the Armenian language and culture, makes the following significant statement, "The Armenians and Assyrians kept up the torch of Hellenism for a long time. The Assyrians became the victims of their culture, vanished and lost their identity among the Arabs. The Armenians, however, kept up the educative rôle."[1]

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[1] Cf. **The Armenian Culture** written in Armenian by the Russian author, Professor N. Marr, p. 17. Translated by the author.

CHAPTER VIII

Armenian Education During the Middle Ages

The educational program instituted by Sahak and Mesrop, as we have already observed, enjoyed only a short life. Soon all worthy efforts at public education in Armenia died out. At the close of the Golden Age the educational situation in Armenia was left in a chaotic state. There were, of course, private tutors in various centers, who taught the young men who were eager enough to be tutored or were able to pay the fees of their masters. Naturally the number of students who received an education in this fashion was very limited. However, on various occasions and in some localities some public-spirited leaders tried to offer opportunities for mass education, in a limited sense, of course. For instance, Sembat Pagradooni opened schools for the children of captive Armenians in his province when he was appointed Marzban or governor by the Persian, Chosroes II (590-627). But this was, in the strictest sense of the word, a local effort. The historians tell us that Ashod the Charitable (953-977) opened schools for children. So did Kakig I (989-1050). But how many of such schools were established and what the nature of the instruction in these schools was, nobody can tell. The Pagratid kings were so busy waging war with their foes that they had no opportunity to pay adequate attention to education. Gregory Magistros, who witnessed the closing days of the Pagratid dynasty, expressed his sincere regrets that the Armenians during the eleventh century did not cherish Hellenism, philosophy, and the liberal arts. But the Pagratid kings encouraged libraries[1] and it is plainly stated that Sarkis Vartabet of Sevan visited one of them in A. D. 1041. On the other hand, during the Middle Ages, in the midst of the universal darkness, a number of monasteries that were scattered here and there, glimmered and at times shone with lustre.

I. The Rise and Development of Monasteries in Armenia.—Monastic orders, according to V. Müller[2] were introduced into Armenia in their simplest forms of solitary living since the first half of the fourth century from Assyria, through the Armenian settlements of Pontus and Cappadocia. But K. Müller claims that monasticism had its origin in Egypt, Assyria, and Armenia simultaneously. We know from Faustus[3] of Byzantium that during the fourth century there were monks in Armenia. For instance, Epiphanus settled in the province, Szovk, and filled it with monasteries and appointed teachers and preachers throughout the province and spread enlightenment everywhere "and then he took along with himself his pupils, solitary men living in deserts and mountains, five hundred in number, and crossed to the zone of Greek influence." Shaghida[4] was another monk who settled in Armenia and taught monastic ideals. We already know that Nerses the Great established in Armenia not only schools, but also several monasteries and convents, according to the plan of St. Basil of Cappadocia; and the Council of Ashdishad[5] (362-363) made one rule for different monastic orders. It is also a fact worthy of note that Mesrop, prior to his nation-wide service as a cultural and educational leader,[1] "had become a monk and suffered all kinds of privations," and again, "he[2] organized numerous groups of monks, in villages and deserts, plains and mountains, and he taught them by his own example, and taking with him some of his pupils from the monasteries and retiring into mountain districts lived on herbs, etc." From this we know that Mesrop taught his followers in monasteries, and he is considered also the founder of monastic education in Armenia.

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[1] Cf. Education Among the Ancient Armenians, by V. Hatzooni, p. 157.

[2] Cf. The Rise of the Armenian Monasticism (Die Anfaenge des Armenischen Moenchtums) in Louys, Armenian translation, 1905, p. 542, by Dr. H. Topchian.

[3] Cf. Faustus of Byzantium, p. 280. Translated by the author.

[4] Cf. Ibid, p. 277.

[5] Cf. Faustus of Byzantium, Book IV, Chapter IV. Translated by the author.

Thus throughout the Middle Ages and ever thereafter Armenia's education was centered in the monasteries, which were very numerous, and some of which were very comfortably endowed. Father Mosesian tells us in his "History of Armenia" that St. Garabet of Taron owned twelve large burghs with a total population of 22,813. In this way this monastery was equal in its extent and wealth to some of the principalities owned by Armenian princes. It was in these institutions that the culture of Armenia was preserved during the Middle Ages; manuscripts were copied and preserved, monks were educated, and libraries were organized. Even up to the present time some of the monastic centers fill the educational needs of the Armenian nation. We shall have occasion to discuss their contributions in their proper chronological order. The Mechitarist monasteries at Venice and Vienna, and the well-known Armenian monasteries at Etchmiadzin, Jerusalem, Armash, etc., have been principal factors in the awakening of the Armenian nation to an educational consciousness during the recent periods of Armenian history. Even St. Jerome[1] (331-420), in his Fifty-seventh Letter, comments on the great number of Armenian monks: "What shall we say about **Armenia,** Persia, India, Ethiopia, Pontus, and Cappadocia, which are rich with monks? They equal the monastic groups of Egypt, Assyria, and Mesopotamia; and they offer us all sorts of virtues. Their language is different, but their piety is the same. There are as many groups in Jerusalem who are singing psalms as there are nations in the world."

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[1] Cf. Gorioun, p. 15.

[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 36.

Zarphanelian, in his "History of Armenian Literature," mentions the names of 216 monasteries which existed in Armenia before the World War. And how numerous they must have been during the Middle Ages when all intellectual activity was centered within the walls of monasteries! In his travels in Asia Minor, in 1909, the author witnessed the ruins of some of the best monasteries, which were enveloped in darkness, whereas in their day they had shed light to various parts of Armenia. Among these the Monastery of Romkla, where Nerses the Gracious wrote his famous works during the twelfth century, offered the most pathetic scene.

II. Some Outstanding Centers of Monastic Education During the Midle Ages.—A. The Sunyatz School was the most distinguished center of learning. Orpelian describes it as "the fountain head of knowledge, and standing at the head of all Armenian science. The schools were very far advanced there. They were very rich and were like the Athenian schools of Greece and Rome . . ."[1] Mr. Kevork[2] Mesrop also gives us a picture of this famous school:

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[1] Cf. F. Lagrange, Lettres Choisies de St. Jerome, p. 160. Quoted by Bishop M. Aghavnouni, in Sion, Armenian monthly magazine of Jerusalem, vol. II, 1928, February number.

"The Sunyatz School was located at the monastery of Shaghad until the ninth century, when it was moved to the monastery of Datev. The founder of the Sunyatz School seems to have been St. Mesrop, who appointed his pupil, Anania, as the superior of this monastery. In a short time the Sunyatz Theological Seminary became very famous, to such a degree that St. Sahak and Mesrop gave them the monopoly of interpreting and translating the Scriptures. A few of the translations of the Golden Age probably were the products of this school. The Sunyatz School is not mentioned until the commencement of the seventh century. But beginning with that century it flourished.

"The Sunyatz School had famous teachers and pupils. Among them were Anania of Sunik, Stepanos of Sunik, Moses the Poet, Ohan Orodnetzi, and Gregory of Datev.

"**The Character of the School.** The non-religious philosophical studies, especially the study of Plato's and Aristotle's works, mathematics, poetry, and music had an important place in the curriculum. "The Book of Essentials" served as the text-book of rhetoric and grammar. The language of the school tended to become Hellenized. Being compelled to translate from classical Greek the philosophical works, they were not able to put in Armenian form all the refinements of the Greek. The products of the Sunyatz School are the works accredited to David the Invincible and all the works of Moses of Khorene.

"The Sunyatz School became famous in poetry prior to its removal to the monastery of Datev. Moses the Poet and Stepanos of Sunik have written many hymns. The liturgical music of the Armenian church is ascribed to him.

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[1] Cf. Zarphanelian, History of Armenian Literature, p. 489. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. History of the Armenian Church, Kevork Mesrop, pp. 319-321.

"After its removal to Datev, this school contributed very much to the national awakening and to the preservation of the national life and traits. During the tenth and fourteenth centuries this school became the foremost institution contributing to national progress and development."

[1]Patriarch Elishe Tourian of Jerusalem, a well-known scholar and formerly a professor in Armash, appreciates highly the influence of the leaders of the Sunyatz School upon Armenian thought, but he deplores their carelessness or incapacity in the use of the Armenian language. "This was not pure Armenian; at best it was a servile imitation of the Greek. Whereas during the Golden Age many of the Greek classical works were translated into Armenian of unsurpassed beauty and suppleness." He goes on to say that the Sunyatz School translated from the Greek several text-books to be used in the teaching of the 'Trivium." In the mastery of the "Quadrivium," Anania[2] of Shirak was thé representative in Armenia.

This school rendered such valuable service during the fourteenth century as the chief counter-reaction to the invasion of Latin missionaries for proselyting Armenia to the Roman faith, that we shall have occasion to discuss its rôle in our tenth chapter.

B. **The Monastery of Narek.**—During the tenth century this monastery became prominent as a splendid center of learning. It was under the leadership of Anania of Narek, a philosopher, superior of the monastery, that the people were attracted to this center of culture.

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[1] This information is found in a personal letter sent to the writer by an historian, Arshag Alboyajian, copied from an unpublished work of Patriarch Tourian.

[2] Cf. Part IV in this same chapter, p. 101.

But it was Gregory of Narek (951-1003) who made the name of this institution immortal in the eyes of the Armenians as well as those foreign scholars who have studied the literary products of this genius of mystic contemplation and poetic creation. He was the son of a famous Armenian, Chosroes Antzevatzi, was born in 951, and educated at the feet of Anania of Narek. Gregory of Narek became not only the author of various literary productions, but served also as a teacher in the monastery. His influence, however, touched the hearts of succeeding generations of Armenians, because his famous book, composed of fervent prayers, unusually original in style, thought and inspiration, served as the text-book in Armenian schools as well as for private pupils tutored by private teachers. Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, every Armenian student became familiar with "Narek." "This book is called also a book of tragedy. And, however complicated in style, it has an incomprehensible, marvelous beauty and sweetness. It has been considered both by Armenian and by foreign philologists as one of those rare books, the like of which has not appeared anywhere in the world, so beautiful and bewitching is its poetical style and construction, so sublime and unexpected is the succession of its ideas, and so rich is its rhetorical charm!"[1]

C. **Sanahin**—Another monastery built by the Pagratid kings served as their sepulchre and became famous during the eleventh century. Gregory Magistros[2], in his Sixty-first Letter, eulogizes this monastery for its splendor as a center of learning, where young men studied rhetoric, music, philosophy, etc., in the schools, and where simple life and abstinence from animal foods were emphasized as well as other monastic virtues.

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[1] Cf. Zarphanelian, History of Armenian Literature, p. 544. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Letters, Gregory Magistros, pp. 136-137. Translated by the author.

In addition to these, a few other prominent monasteries need to be mentioned to give a comprehensive view of the situation, but we omit doing this at this juncture, because we shall have occasion to discuss them in full detail in our next chapter as factors contributory to the rise of the Lesser Renaissance.

II. The Influence of Arabic Culture upon Armenian Education in the Middle Ages.—We have already pointed out that the Armenians who were ruled by the Arsacid dynasty lost their independence in A. D. 428, and came under the rule of the Persians, who governed Armenia by Marzbans who were mostly Persians. From A. D. 632 or 642 to 839, Arabs ruled Armenia, and Armenian Pagratids or princes, in the meantime gradually regained semi-independence. Ashot I won royal distinction in A. D. 861, and the Pagratid dynasty came to an end in A. D. 1079. During the period of the Pagratid kings, Armenia was a vassal state to the Arabic dominion of Bagdad, and naturally was in immediate contact with Arabic culture. It is not a new fact to the students of history that during the Middle Ages the Arabs occupied one of the foremost places in the world in cultural achievements. That the Arabs contributed to the oncoming revival of learning is a fact accepted by all historians. Above all, the contributions of the Arabs in the development of medical science, mathematics, chemistry, etc., have been very significant. The very word "algebra" is an Arabic term, and the Arabic notation transformed the study of mathematics as a science, which in turn made new inventions in the field of the other sciences. True, for all of these contributions the Arabs owe a great deal to the ancient Greeks, but it is a credit to them that they interested themselves during the Dark Ages in the works of Greek scientists and philosophers, while all Christendom was absorbed in theological disputations and hair-splitting arguments. It is interesting to know, then, whether or not the Armenians were influenced by Arabic culture in the Middle Ages, since they came in immediate contact with the Arabs as their rulers.

Analyzing all its cultural life during this period, one immediately observes the fact that Armenia intentionally became impervious to the influence of Arabic culture. Of course, there were here and there a few curious minds who, disregarding all the racial and religious barriers that separated them from their rulers, studied the works of Arabic scientists. We shall have occasion to discuss the works of two Armenian scientists who during the Middle Ages digressed from the general path of pursuit usually followed by all great minds who devoted themselves exclusively to the study of theology and sacred philosophy. But on the whole, the nation remained aloof from Arabic influences. In this connection, however, we must admit that upon poetry and arts, as well as to some extent upon the development of the medieval Armenian language, the Arabs exercised a certain degree of influence. This curious situation is explained by Zarphanelian[1] in a convincing manner:

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[1] Cf. Zarphanelian, History of Armenian Literature, p. 27.

"But this nation, although they exercised on our language an influence which was undesirable, did not have any influence on our science, which would have been quite desirable. Armenian education and literature were under the leadership of Armenian clergymen, who naturally would endeavor to keep the nation aloof from the influence of the Arabic books. They themselves would avoid the temptation of assimilating anything from Arabic literature for fear that thereby the Christian religion might be endangered in Armenia. This was especially true because the Arab[1] rulers offered many enticing attractions to the Armenian princes to win them over to their religion. This fear, however, did not concern the Arabic fine arts. For this reason we observe that the Armenians were not slow in assimilating the architectural taste of the Arabs, their mosaics and fine carvings; and combining these with the Byzantine architecture, the Armenians created a style of their own, known in the world as the Armenian architectural style which can still be seen in the ruins of Ani."

To appreciate the beauty of this architecture, if one is unable to visit Ani and its environs, one can turn the pages of that stupendous work of the Austrian scholar in architecture, in which the pictures of cathedrals and other monuments are reproduced in a creditable way. Here is his authoritative remark on this point:

"Vor allem werden die Kunstforscher mit der Vorstellung brechen müssen, die Armenier für Barbaren zu nehmen, die erst von Rom oder Byzanz her Kultur zugetragen erhielten. Der Süden und Westen wirken auf das Hochland, soweit es sich um

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[1] Arab rulers at first tried to win over the leaders in Armenia to Islam, but in vain. Fred Lynch (Cf. Armenia, Vol. 1, p. 339) describes the following case, which is sufficient to illustrate this point: "But Sembat was conveyed to Bagdad with the rest of the prisoners and accompanied the triumphal return of the Caliph's legate. Arrived at court, the Armenian princes were offered the choice of Islam and freedom or a painful and violent death. Sembat was one of those who refused to adjure his religion and who perished as a martyr to the Christian faith. (A. D. 856, c.)"

Kirchlichen Geist handelt; in der Baukunst aber verfügten die Armenier über eine alte aus Mittelasian stamende Überlieferung und Schufen ein Gemeindebaus bevor noch die Christliche Mittelmeerkunst zu wirken begann. Die alte asiatisch arische Kultur blieb in Armenien Sieger und daraus erklärt sich, das der Kuppelbau, nicht die Basilike, dort Herschend werden konnte und dann von Armenien aus Europa eroberte."[1] (p. 1.)

One can also get a good glimpse of the beauty of Ani, as it existed during the tenth and eleventh centuries, as the capital city of the Pagratid dynasty, from the pen picture of Fred Lynch[2], an eye-witness and a scholar of Armenian affairs, who concludes his detailed description in the following words:

"But a lesson of wider import, transcending the sphere of the history of architecture, may be derived from a visit to the capital of the Bagratid dynasty, and from the study of the living evidence of a vanished civilization, which is lavished upon the traveler within her walls. Her monuments throw a strong light upon the character of the Armenian people, and they bring into pronouncement important features of Armenian history. They leave no doubt that this people may be included in the small number of races who have shown themselves susceptible of the highest culture. They exhibit the Armenians as able and sympathetic intermediaries between the civilization of the Byzantine Empire, with its legacies from that of Rome, and the nations of the East. They testify to the tragic suddenness with which the development of the race was arrested at a time when they had attained a measure of political freedom, and when their capacities, thus favored, were commencing to bear fruit."[1]

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[1] Cf. Die Baukunst Der Armenier Und Europa, Band I, II, von Josef Strzygowske, University of Vienna, p. 1. "Above all, the investigators of the arts must abandon the notion that the Armenians were barbarians to whom culture was carried from Rome or Byzantium. The South and West influenced the Highland as far as ecclesiastical tempers were concerned; but in architecture the Armenians resorted to an old tradition coming from Middle Asia, and created a distinctive style of architecture of their own before ever the Christian Mediterranean architecture began. The old Asiatic-Arian culture remained victor in Armenia, and that explains how the cupola type of building, not the basilican, could rule in Armenia and from there take possession of Europe." Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Armenia, Vol. I, pp. 367-390.

IV. Some Outstanding Men of Science and Culture During the Middle Ages.—A. In ancient Armenia we do not meet a man who was as distinguished in mathematical and astronomical science as Anania of Shirak, a very inquisitive soul, who was aflame with a zeal for research. He lived during the seventh century. It must be remembered that the influence of Arabic culture was beginning to be felt in the East at this time. And we may presume that Anania was caught in this wave of intellectual pursuits which was initiated by the Arabs. We are supported in this assumption by the fact that Anania did not go to Greece and Rome to satisfy his intellectual appetite. On the contrary, he went first to Theodosopolis (Garin) on the Black Sea litoral, in Asia Minor, to study under a Greek teacher. Nor must we forget that at this time Greek scientists of Asia Minor co-operated with the Arabs in the study of Greek classical literature, interpreting to the Arabs the rich heritage of their ancestors. In this way, Arabic culture was grafted upon the culture of ancient Greece. So after a short stay there, Anania was told to go to Constantinople, where he did not find much satisfaction and returned to Trebizond, in Asia Minor, where he found a scholar, Dukigos, by name. Anania studied under this master for eight years. He read all his books. And finally, he introduced the science of mathematics into Armenia. He privately taught numerous Armenian young men who, however, were satisfied with only a smattering of mathematics, and about whose indifference Anania voiced his complaints. But among his pupils, Zarphanelian mentions a few distinguished Armenians: Tiridates, Azaria, Kirakos, Ezekiel.

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 391, Vol. I.

His literary production, "A History of the Universe," in ancient Armenian, served for centuries as the text-book of science in Armenia.

He also wrote a book on "Measures and Scales," in imitation of Epiphanus of Cyprus.

B. **Mechitar Heratzi** of the twelfth century was a genuine product of Arabic culture and influence in Armenia. He was interested in medical science and the best sources for study of this branch during the Middle Ages were found in the Arabic language. Students of history are fully aware that medicine as a science was introduced into Southern Italy through the activities of men who represented Arabic culture. And the first famous medical college at Salerno[1] owed its origin to their influence. It was natural, therefore, that medical science should be introduced at this time in Armenia under the influence of the Arabs. Mechitar Heratzi studied the Arabic works and wrote a book, "Chermantz Kirk," which constitutes a source book in medicine for Armenian doctors. He was a master of three foreign languages, Arabic, Persian, and Greek.

C. Besides these men of science, there were also a few philosophers who became famous in the Hellenic centers. Kakig II, (1042-1045), the last Armenian king of the Pagratid dynasty, was a philosopher and theologian of some note. Matthew of Edessa[2], the historian of this period, lavishes eulogies to the memory of this king who sat in St. Sophia among the Greek philosophers and carried on philosophical and theological disputations with them, astonishing the king as well as the scholars with the soundness of his logic and the depth of his knowledge.

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[1] Cf. "The Rise of Universities in the Middle Ages", by K. A. Sarafian, **Education**, Vol. XLVII, March 1927, No. 7.

[2] Cf. Matthew of Edessa, **History**, pp. 161, 178.

The reader is already familiar with the great philosopher, Gregory Magistros, whose "Letters" in some cases served as lectures on philosophy and who was decorated by the emperor of Byzantium with the title of Magistros. He also introduced Arabic versification in Armenia.

To sum up: During the Middle Ages the mass of common people in Armenia were deprived of the benefits of education. Only a very limited number of persons had access to the cultural treasures, hidden in the literary products of the Golden Age. Only in the monasteries was the spirit of enlightenment kept alive and Arabic culture had a very insignificant influence upon Armenian culture, a fact which is deplorable in its consequence, namely, the meagerness of scientific literature and pursuits in Armenia in the past.

CHAPTER IX

The Lesser Renaissance in Armenia in the Twelfth Century, A. D.

I. The Rise of Armenian Independent Political Life in Cilicia.—The Pagratid dynasty came to an end when Kakig II was treacherously held in Constantinople as a political prisoner. Thus Ani fell into the hands of the Byzantine Empire, A. D. 1046. However, the Byzantine emperors were not able to hold it for long because the Tartars invaded Armenia, and their leader, Alp Aslan, destroyed Ani in A. D. 1064. The final blow to the glorious capital of the Pagratids was given by the Tartars, under their leader, Tcharmaghan Khan, in A. D. 1239. As a result of these stormy political conditions, a great number of enterprising Armenians migrated to Poland, and some took refuge in the recesses of the Taurus Mountains in Cilicia, which comprises a great part of the historic Lesser Armenia. The Armenian immigrants in Poland brought their contributions to the common civilization of Poland, Transylvania, and Boukovina; and finally they became assimilated and amalgamated among the native populations, only a few Armenian names of towns, cathedral buildings, and historical records remaining.

But the Armenians who took refuge in the solitude of the Taurus Mountains met with better fortune, for they created not only a national life and civilization in Cilicia but also an independent Armenian kingdom, which brought Armenia into closer contact with Europe. We can summarize the cardinal points of this episode in a few sentences. Roupen, an Armenian prince and close relative of Kakig, the last Pagratid king, came to Cilicia in 1080 with a band of warriors. This country then belonged to the Byzantine empire. There is a tradition that in Cilicia there were a few scattered Armenian settlements. Through their military strategy, Roupen and his followers gradually fortified themselves in inaccessible mountain districts and slowly expanded toward the plains. They fought many battles against the Byzantine troops. Finally they found their opportunity to register their hostility against the Byzantine empire by rendering aid to the crusaders of Europe. In this way, Constantine, one of the successors of Roupen, was given the title of Marquis in recognition of his assistance to the crusaders. In A. D. 1159, Guir Manouel, the emperor of the Byzantine empire, had to follow suit and recognize the Roupinians as sovereign princes in Cilicia. In A. D. 1187, Leon II was crowned the first officially recognized King of Cilicia as a reward for his assistance to the Crusaders who had marched into the Holy Land under the leadership of Friedrich Barbarossa. The royal crown was sent by Heinrich VI to Leon II in 1187. A few years later, in A. D. 1196, the Emperor of Byzantium also sent a crown to him. Thus the Armenians became an independent nation in Cilicia, ruled by the Roupinian kings. The Roupinians, through intermarriage, came into close relationship with the European royal and princely houses who reigned in Cyprus, Edessa, Antioch, etc. Finally, the Lussignans, a French house of nobility, reigned upon the throne of Armenia. And the last king, Leon VI, after a long struggle, had to surrender himself into the hands of the Mamelukes of Egypt, who kept him captive for a few years. Thus the Roupinian dynasty came to an end in A. D. 1375. After being released from his captors, Leon tried in vain to bring about harmony and reconciliation between England and France, in order to stem the tide of the Tartarian invasions in the Holy Land and Asia Minor. He died in Paris, and his sepulcher is found in the Abbey of St. Denis with a Latin inscription upon it.

II. Cilicia a Center of Political and Commercial Activity for Europe.—During the period of the Cilician kingdom, the Armenians established friendly relations with the European peoples. There were many Italian, French, and other European settlements within the confines of Cilicia, especially on the shores of the Mediterranean, in the flourishing seaports. Among these ports, Ajas, in the Gulf of Alexandretta, was the most important:

> "Armenian Cilicia, thanks to the far-seeing policy of Leon the Great, opened its door before the European capital, and beginning with the thirteenth century it became the principal market for international commerce. During a period when the western powers were fighting intensely against the sultans of Egypt, there came a moment when the Christian merchants were forbidden, by the Papal bull, to enter into a Mohametan seaport. By this Cilicia was greatly benefited, and it flourished rapidly, growing in power and wealth.
>
> "On the long littoral of Cilicia, there were more than ten busy seaports. During the Armenian reign Ajas became the most famous of them all, and was called by the Europeans the seaport of 'the Armenian King.' "[1]

The European colonies in Cilicia enjoyed certain privileges and in return Armenian colonies in Genoa,

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[1] Cf. **The Great Seaport of the Armenians,** by V. M. Kurkjian, in Armenian, **Gotchnag,** Vol. XVII, 1917, p. 1209. Translated by the author.

Venice, etc., enjoyed hospitality and similar privileges:

"Taking into consideration the great crowds of foreigners and the representatives of the foreign countries, as well as the diplomatic and marital relations existing between the Europeans and Armenians, Leon II consented to the establishments of schools in Sis, the capital city of Cilicia, for teaching Latin, because it was the language of the Middle Ages. But the principal language that was used at the court was French. The names of all the governmental offices also were French. The usual ceremonies at the court and the order as well as the laws in the tribunals were French. The Armenian court endeavored to establish marital relation with the French court and the nobility. The other foreign languages in which the Armenian court employed special dragomans were: Italian, Arabic, Tartar, Turkish, and Ethiopian."[1]

The Armenians settled in great numbers especially in the confines of the Venetian Republic, and were heartily welcomed:

"The Venetian colony, rich, numerous, and esteemed by the Most Serene Republic, had its beautiful national church, and monasteries besides. Ravenna was the first to receive Armenians into Italy in the early centuries of the Christian era and was called "The Armenian City"; as was also Rimine."[2] . . . . "Both Armenians and Venetians were practical people, and each knew the value of the other. The pivot of their relations was the commerce between the Armenian mercantile marine and the Most Serene, which in 1282, seeing how greatly their commerce was developing, established "bailiffs" at the Armenian court, who remained there until 1334, when Ajas, the most important port on the part of the Mahometans, was captured. . . . . On the other hand, the Armenian kings were particularly deferent to the Venetian Republic and its representatives, and the "Charter of Concessions" of Aiton I, 1291), of Leo II (1271), and of Aiton II, testify not merely to the commerce exercised on such a large scale, but also to their friendly political relations."[1] . . . "Venice thus became an intellectual center for Armenians, and those who resorted there found help not only from their compatriots, but also from their patricians and Doges."[2]

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[1] Cf. Cilicia (Giligia), in Armenian, publication of The Arax, St. Petersburg, p. 138. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, in English translation, done by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 212.

From this, it will be clearly seen that Cilicia through its strategic location, had become almost a cosmopolitan center for international commerce at this period. Armenia prospered and showed the results of this prosperity in the increase of monasteries and monastic educational centers.

III. The Crusades and Their Influence upon the Awakening of an Interest in European Culture.—As has been mentioned before, the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia rendered valuable assistance to the European crusaders in their campaigns against the Mohametans of Syria and Palestine. In this way a genuine friendship was established between the Christians of Europe and of Cilicia. While this friendship became beneficial for the Armenians for a short period, on the other hand it cost them rather dearly, because thereby Armenia invited upon herself the ire of the non-Christian and non-Aryan races of Asia and Africa, and finally succumbed to the onslaughts of these barbarian peoples. However, Armenia gained immensely in higher culture by mingling so closely with the representatives of Europe. The intellectual life of the Armenians in Cilicia was indeed enviable in this period. The greatest obstacle to a still closer alliance between Armenia and Latin civilization was found in the fact that Armenia staunchly adhered to her independent church, and this in spite of the constant efforts at proselytism on the part of the Roman clergy. And the last Armenian king, Leon Lusignan, lost his grip upon his subjects and finally lost his throne on account of his leanings toward Rome. In the light of this religious hostility the appreciation of Pope Gregory XIII of the service of the Armenians to the cause of the Crusades is very significant:

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 216.

[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 223.

> "In 1384, Pope Gregory XIII, in the papal bull, does glowing justice to the Armenians. This homage rendered to the Armenian people by the sovereign pontiff must not be forgotten.
>
> "Among the other merits of the Armenian nation towards the church and the Christian Republic, there is one which is eminent and worthy of special mention; namely, when the princes of the Christian armies went to the delivery of the Holy Land, no nation and no people rendered them aid with more promptness and with more zeal than the Armenians, in men, horses, food, counsel; with all their forces and with the greatest bravery and faithfulness, they helped the Christians in their holy wars."[1]

Although the great mass of the Armenian people resisted the allurements of the Roman See, a small group of people adhered to the Roman faith, and in this way Latins came to Armenia, especially during the fourteenth century and thereafter, and left their influence upon Armenian education, a matter which will be discussed at length in succeeding chapters. We may anticipate by saying that contacts which the Armenians established with western civilization through the expansion of commerce and the invasions of the crusaders were beneficial in the development of a general consciousness toward intellectual and cultural attainments.

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[1] Cf. **Histoire du Peuple Armenien**, by Jacque de Morgan, p. 239. Translated by the author.

IV. **The Educational Situation.**—After observing the political, commercial, and social progress in Cilician Armenia, it would be natural to expect also a corresponding progressive movement in the field of education. This was not the case, if by education we mean the establishment of educational institutions for the children of the common people. By scanning the works of the historians of this period, we find no evidence of any extensive movement in that direction. Although it is told authoritatively[1] that Leon III showed his love for education, and that besides the school which he founded he patronized the educated people and offered special prizes for masters and writers, yet we have not been able to find any convincing proof that during the entire period of the Cilician kingdom the children of the Armenian common people had any opportunity for an education, such as they had enjoyed under Tiridates, and also during the Golden Age of the Armenian culture. At any rate, the existence of such a movement for public education, in the narrow sense of course, cannot be imagined if we consider that the period of the Roupinian dynasty was the genuine period of feudalism, not only in Europe, but in Cilicia, as well, which was modeled upon the European plan of social structure. In Cilicia as well as in Europe, there were educational centers, to be sure. But these were limited to the few, catering especially to the clergy and nobility. In this respect we find several witnesses to the fact that in Cilicia a number of monasteries rose to prominence and at times proved to be centers of intellectual activity. "The reputation of Sis as a center of education attracted many famous Armenian Vartabets from Major Armenia. These men received instruction here. Often they concealed their identity in order to pursue their education unhampered, and to search for books, in order to carry them back with them. Thus Mechitar Kosh, Vartan the Historian, Giragos of Kantzag, John of Eriza, and John Orpelian were in Sis, and were even received in the court."[1] A modern historian summarizes very aptly the educational endeavors of the Roupinian kings:

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[1] Cf. Siswan, by Leo Alishan, p. 519, in Armenian.

> "Leon I, while on the one hand modeling his kingdom after the Latin courts, endeavored also to raise the level of his nation's intellectual attainments to an enviable height. He gathered in his court many prominent literary and military men, Armenian as well as foreign.
>
> "He desired that all the monasteries should have their own schools, where the clergymen would learn grammar, music, history, and calligraphy. These monastic schools flourished even during the first period of the Roupinian dynasty, out of which had emerged great men like St. Nerses the Gracious (1166-1173), Gregory the Youth (1177-1180), and St. Nerses of Lampron (died in 1198). In the hands of these men the Armenian language became so refined that it would not be an exaggeration to call this period the Silver Period of Armenian Culture."[2]

We have called this period the Lesser Renaissance of Armenian culture, because it was during this epoch that many great leaders flourished who endeavored to carry the torch of civilization forward, and some of them even tried to reach the great masses of people to awaken them to a love for culture and moral and spiritual virtues.

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[1] Cf. Cilicia (Giligia), publication of Arax, St. Petersburg, p. 138. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. The History of Armenia, by Father Mosessian, in Armenian. Translated by the author.

V. **Outstanding Leaders of the Intellectual Awakening.**—A. **Nerses the Gracious** (1098-1173) was the son of the daughter of Gregory Magistros, and younger brother of Gregory Bahlavouni, the Katholikos.

He was educated first at the feet of Gregory "Vgayaser," who is said to have been the translator of "Chrysostom's Life." His next teacher, who left a lasting impression on this intelligent young man, was Stepanos, the superior of the monastery, known by the Armenian name "Garmir." From his writings one can conclude that his education was centered on theology rather than on philosophy. He rose to such prominence that he became the Katholikos of all Armenia, from 1166-1173. But he interests us chiefly because of his endeavors to spread the light of education not only among the bishops, married clergy, and monks, but also among the children of the common folk.

He complains in his letter to Guir Manouel, the emperor of Byzantium, about the lack of schools in Armenia: "Where are our schools, established under the order of the kings?" By this he refers to the schools established by Tiridates as well as by Vramshabooh, and the emperor of Byzantium. This shows that such schools of a more or less public nature were wanting in Armenia at this time. It also indicates that Nerses the Gracious was not satisfied with the existing monastic schools and yearned for the establishment of additional schools for the children of the common people. But owing to incessant wars in which the

Cilician kings[1] were engaged because Cilicia constituted an island of prosperity and of culture surrounded by vast masses of barbarian people who flooded Armenia by their bloodshed, his ambition was not realized.

Nerses the Gracious wrote "Pastoral Letters" for the benefit of monks, bishops, and married clergy, and a series of "Instructive Verses" in which he exhorted the youth to love virtue, learning, and morals. In addition to these, he also wrote a number of puzzles to arouse the intellectual curiosity of the youth. Let us give a few brief quotations from these books.

In his "Letter" addressed to the bishops, he advises them "to superintend the teaching of the Word of God; to learn and to know, and also to preach the divine laws. This is the first duty, after which comes the management of financial affairs."[2]

Writing to the married clergy, he says, "No one among you should love the blindness of ignorance in the study of your subjects, as a result of indolence or worldly occupation."[3]

In another letter addressed to Stepanos, he writes of the "Philosophical Definitions" of David the Invincible.

But the work which interests the educational historian of the period is found in his "pank chapav" or "Verses," which are written in thirty-seven stanzas, each beginning in regular order with the letters of the Armenian alphabet. Thus the form as well as the content of these verses is intended to appeal to the imagination of the youth of his period. In this sense, he was the educator and the moral mentor of the Armenian children who were deprived of the benefits of an education. As the reader will observe, the keynote of these verses is the teaching of moral virtues for the building of good character. Here are some of these verses in translation, which can do no justice to the exquisite beauty both in form and in thought, of the original:

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[1] Cf. The accounts of any Armenian or other historian.

[2] Cf. [3] Cf The Letters of Nerses the Gracious, Katholikos of Armenia, in ancient Armenian. Translated by the author. Published at St. Lazarus, 1873.

[3] Ibid.

Advice to Learners and Children

The C stores up for you countless good things,
Writes its thought on the Hornbook for you;
Hang it therefore, about your neck, my child;
More precious it is than the gold.

The D opens wide the door of learning
That leads to wisdom's house;
Knock, then, and enter with courage—
Be not found waiting without.

The E sings sweetly to your ears
An account to give of your debts
As children must sometime give an account
While learning the alphabet;

Or when the masters call to account
Their stewards for all their work
Remember that you are God's steward on earth
Of your soul and all other rich gifts.

The Z wakes you up, O child!
With its sound like a booming drum.
Do not be tired of learning,
Lest you should greatly bemoan it.

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[1] Cf. **The Book of Verses,** Nerses the Gracious, in classical Armenian. Translated by the author.

The H tells you, my child, to hear
This word of counsel, dear:
Give not yourself up unto vain things.
Indulge not in frivolous plays,
But go to the house of the wise.
Do not be tired of learning,
Lest you shall one day regret
That you've lost what you cannot retrieve.

L warns you to listen to father
And leave not the rules of your mother.
Obey also the Vartabet
From whom you gain knowledge.

The B exhorts you to be honest
And not to stuff your stomach,
To turn away from drinking wine,
To open not your mouth in vain.

The S exhorts you: Seek the truth,
Discretion, and industry,
To cherish always purity
By which your soul is strengthened.

It is almost superfluous to add any word of comment upon the work of this great soul who radiated so rich an inspiration from his generous heart at an age when the youth of the common people was almost forgotten in the meshes of an intricate social order, at the height of feudalism.

B. **Mechitar Kosh** (died 1213) is another Armenian of the Lesser Renaissance,, who not only taught many young men in his monastery, Kedig, which was constructed by himself, but also enriched Armenian culture through a scholarly compilation of the Armenian code, in 1184, at the special request of King Vachtang and Bishop Stepanos of Albania.

"Vachtang VI, the king of Georgia, or rather of Kartalina, organized a code in the Georgian tongue toward the beginning of the eighteenth century. This book consists of seven parts, the second part of which contains the Armenian law."[1] This code was actually put in practice not only in Georgia, but in Russia as well, to govern the conduct of the Armenians.

Historians allege that Mechitar's work was exclusively scholarly research, and did not serve as the binding code in Armenia. However, in 1518, Sigismund I, the king of Poland, ordered it translated into Latin.[2] In 1601 it was translated into the Polish language, and by special permission of the rulers the Armenians were governed in Poland according to this code, with only a few modifications.

This code has an item of interest to the educational historian of Armenia: "Let anathemas fall upon those who beat their sons and do not instruct them and do not take care of them according to their ability in their physical and spiritual nutrition until they become of age, and those who look down upon them on account of their abstinence and monastic aspirations."[3] This article touching Armenian education shows that the only way to encourage education was for the clergy to resort to anathema.

Mechitar's Educational Work.—Mechitar was a teacher of great reputation and by reason of this his monastery attracted a great number of brilliant young men. He seems to have been especially strong in civil and canon law. The historian of the period, Giragos, thus evaluates his work as an educator:

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[1] Cf. The Book of Laws of Mechitar Kosh, edited by Vahan Vartabet Pastamiantz, p. 105, in Armenian. Translated by the author.

[2] (Statuta juris Armenici per Sigismundum primum Regem Poloniæ potentissimum approbata et confirmata, etc.)

[3] Cf. The Book of Laws of Mechitar Kosh, article 90, by Vahan Vartabet Pastamiantz. Translated by the author.

> "Many were those who studied under him to learn the tenets of the doctrine, because the fame of his wisdom echoed everywhere and they came to him from all sections. . . . . There were many Vartabets of fame who concealed their identity and came to receive instruction under him. And many of his pupils attained the rank of Vartabets. But there were two among these who were the wisest of all, and capable and useful to others. One of these was called Toros, from the neighborhood of Melidine (Malatia) . . . The other was the Vanagan Vartabet, superior to all in theological knowledge as well as in creative intellect and in fluency and appropriateness of speech. For this reason numerous people journeyed far to receive an education under him; not only his knowledge in theology, but all his life and his activities served as influences of unwritten law to all who saw him."[1] Giragos, the historian, adds: "And I, the historian, Giragos, a pupil of St. Vartabet Mechitar, who was called Kosh, heard with my own ears and saw with my own eyes so many wonderful things."[2]

C. Another great leader of the Lesser Renaissance was Nerses of Lampron (1153-1199) from the Cilician nobility, his father, Oshin, owning the Castle of Lampron in Cilicia. Alishan[3] describes him as a great scholar, who was trained from his early childhood in the arts; and also, thanks to the care of his mother, he had mastered the Hellenic literature.

Nerses of Lampron was the superior of the Skevra monastery, and was one of those men who recommended conciliation between the Armenian and Roman churches, although his efforts were in vain.

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[1] Cf. Giragos, History, in classical Armenian, pp. 112-113. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Ibid, p. 243.

[3] Cf. Hayabadoum, by Alishan, pp. 414-416.

Besides these men there flourished many others of high scholarship and learning, such as Sembat le Connetable[1]; Hetoum, the lord of the castle called Gorigos and the famous historian on the history of the Tartars; and Matthew of Ourha (Edessa), another valuable historian. The presence of these as well as of many other men of high educational attainments is witness to the fact that monastic education in Cilicia as well as in Major Armenia had become very efficient during this period. Small wonder, then, that the Trazarg monastery, the sepulcher of the Roupinian kings, was called a "place of philosophers and lovers of learning."[2]

We shall see in the next chapter how the flourishing monasteries in Armenia reached their height of development during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and how one of them, "Kailatzor," won the title of University under its great superior, Isaiah Nishetzi.

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[1] Who wrote **Des Assises d'Antioche**, of which, according to Jacque de Morgan, Alishan gave a "very precious French translation", the original text disappeared. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Siswan**, by Alishan, p. 233.

CHAPTER X

Monastic Education at Its Height

A few of the monasteries in Cilicia during the twelfth century reached such heights of intellectual attainment that they became famous throughout all Armenia. In the preceding chapter mention was made of the fact that a number of educated Vartabets from Major Armenia came to Cilician monasteries during the twelfth century to carry on their research or to supply themselves with necessary books. But during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the center of gravity of Armenian intellectual work shifted from Cilicia to the monastic centers in Major Armenia. One reason for this shifting is to be found in the fact that the leaders of the Armenian clergy in Cilicia, under the influence of the court, favored a union with the Latin church, while the leaders in Major Armenia were strictly opposed to such a union. They, therefore, endeavored to arm themselves with intellectual weapons to defend their faith. In order to be able to cope with the situation, they decided to study theology as well as philosophy. Another reason why the monastic institutions of Major Armenia gained the upper hand was that by the fall of the Cilician dynasty the political support of the Cilician school finally gave way. And when Rome sent special missionaries to Major Armenia to extend the influence of papal authority in that section, the Armenian leaders there were stimulated more than ever to encourage education in their monastic institutions as a safeguard for the preservation and defense of the faith handed down by St. Gregory the Illuminator.

I. **Monastic Centers of "University" Rank.**— Especially two of the monasteries of Major Armenia emerged during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as centers of education of medieval "university" type. The term "university" or "hamalisaran" is used to describe the school centered at the monastery of Kailatzor, near Erivan. Father Hatzouni[1] quotes from the prefaces of two manuscripts, written at this monastery in A. D. 1318, which throw some light on this matter. ,This was written, it says, "during the instructorship of Isaiah, that brilliant orator and great philosopher of vast erudition, who is a true image of God, and a man filled with the Holy Spirit, discreet, humble, and valiant at heart." And describing the school, he adds, "I venture to call this school a second Athens and the capital of all learning." Another manuscript[2], written 1321, speaks more specifically of this school and its teacher in the following words: This was written, it says, "during the instructorship of the Saint, very fortunate and brilliant orators (rhetoricians) of Armenia, namely, David and Isaiah, and in the saintly monastery (hamalisaran) or "university" of Kailatzor, and under the patronage of the above-mentioned masters." We also find evidence of licensing to teach in Armenia according to the fashion of the medieval universities of Europe, in the following passage, also quoted by Hatzouni[1] from a manuscript IX, 1091, now in the monastery of St. Lazarus, Venice. Gregory of Datev, giving the rank of the Vartabet to Thomas, writes to Arjishetzi: "I gave him authority and license to teach, to organize classes, and to teach there the laws of God."

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[1] Cf. **Education among the Ancient Armenians**, p. 202. Manuscript IX, 1128, now in the Mechitarist monastery at St. Lazarus, Venice, Italy. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Ibid.** This manuscript also is in the library of the Mechitarist monastery in Venice. Translated by the author.

We have also information regarding the status of teachers and scientists in Armenia, in the following law: "This law exempts from all taxation the medical doctors, Vartabets, and all scientists and literary men who live in cities and villages; and no one has authority to tax them, to dishonor them, or to scorn them, or to beat them. They can be made trustees for the orphans."[2]

Some of these brief references indicate to us, at least, that the school of the monastery of Kailatzor was of a fairly high standing. This fact is affirmed by the products of this school, men of outstanding accomplishments in the medieval Armenian world. It is also a fact worthy of notice that the term "university" in Armenia is used during the first quarter of the fourteenth century, a date which corresponds to the period of great expansion and development of medieval universities in Europe. This shows also that at this time Armenia was in touch with the intellectual movement in Europe and was modeling her educational institutions after the European pattern. Of course, the term "university," used to describe the monastic school of Kailatzor, should not be taken in its modern sense; it should rather be viewed in the light of its medieval setting. At any rate, the type of institution referred to by the term "university" during the Middle Ages was a center[1] of higher learning, where sacred theology and philosophy were taught, as for example, in the University of Paris, by great masters who had gained great erudition through their intellectual gifts and unceasing labors. At the monastery of Kailatzor at this period we find two great men of learning, Isaiah Nishetzi, and David, who by the fame of their intellectual attainments attracted from various districts of Armenia young men of exceptional intelligence, who studied theology, philosophy, rhetoric, grammar, sacred music, manuscript making, copying, and decorating under them. It is mentioned that in the monastery of Kailatzor there were about 365 students who studied under Isaiah Nishetzi. Ohan Orodnetzi and Gregory of Datev were the most outstanding figures among the pupils of this great master.

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[1] Ibid, p. 205.

[2] Cf. An Unknown Armenian Code, by Dr. H. Topchian, from a manuscript of the XIV century, different from the codes of Mechitar Kosh, or the code of the Emperor and Des Assises de Sembat Le Connetable, p. 147, Teotig. Translated by the author.

Besides the monastery of Kailatzor, the famous Sunyatz[2] school at this period burst forth again in splendor, at the monastery of Datev. We shall discuss the development and influence of this school a little later in this chapter.

II. Latin Missionaries and Their Influence on Armenian Education.—It has already been mentioned that during the period of Cilician rule the Armenians came into close contact with Christian Europe. As a result of the Armenians' assistance to the crusaders, a friendly relationship gradually began to develop between the two ancient churches of apostolic origin. Even toward the end of the Cilician kingdom, the Armenian court was entirely in sympathy with the idea of a union; and some of the influential Armenian church leaders showed a favorable attitude toward this union. Nerses of Lampron was one of the most outstanding partisans for this. Thus, in the course of time a unionist party came into existence. Finally, during the pontificate of the Armenian Katholikos, Hagop II of Ani (1327-1341), Pope John XXII sent two groups of missionaries into Armenia; the Franciscans to work in northern Armenia and Georgia, and the Dominicans to propagate the Catholic faith in Armenia and Persia. Epecially one of the emissaries of the pope, Bartholomew[1], surnamed the "Small," showed great activity, being a man of high intellect, education, and initiative. He and his co-workers tried to organize a party in Armenia, with the name "Fratres Unitores," whose purpose was to bring about a union between the Roman and the Armenian churches. This same missionary, Bartholomew, established a monastery at Maragha, and later organized a school. The purpose of this school was to propagate the Roman faith as well as to further instruction in Latin.

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[1] Cf. "The Rise of Universities during the Middle Ages", by K. A. Sarafian, in **Education**, Vol. XLVII, March, 1927, No. 7.

[2] Cf. Chapter VII, "Armenian Education during the Middle Ages", Part II—**Sunyatz School.**

Isaiah Nichetzi, the Armenian master in the monastery of Kailatzor, on hearing of the activities of the pope's emissary, Bartholomew, sent one of his pupils, John of Kurni, in 1328, to the Latin monastery at Maragha to gather information relative to the activities of the Fratres Unitores. John, however, instead of fulfilling the mission entrusted to him, went over to the side of the Roman missionaries and became a staunch proponent of the unionist party. Bartholomew died in 1333. Thereupon John Kurni went to Rome and succeeded in having the Armenian party of Fratres Unitores affirmed by the pope as a monastic order. There is no doubt that through the financial and moral assistance of the then powerful Roman See these men established several schools of propaganda. "The difference in religious beliefs had, in its turn, an influence over the difference in education. It was necessary to open schools for this purpose. Thus, John of Kurni and his followers were not content with their particular establishment at Maragha and their schools. So they felt the necessity of spreading themselves in Nakhitchevan, Sultanieh, Tiflis, and Crimea."[1]

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[1] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, translated into English by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 44.

The influence on Armenian education of these Latin orders has been both direct and indirect.

A. The direct influence of the Latin missionaries, according to the consensus of opinion of the Armenian historians, was very negligible during the fourteenth century. Their educational institutions were not able to reach any considerable number of young men. The dominating purpose of these institutions was to carry on proselytism, which was very offensive to the unusually religious Armenian people of the Middle Ages. They staunchly persisted in clinging to the faith of their fathers and preferred to go with them to hell rather than enjoy the blessings of paradise if their ancestors were not to be found there also. Their determination was voiced in exactly these words by one of the leaders of the Sunyatz school.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, in Armenian, Zarphanelian, Vol. II, p. 6. Translated by the author.

They also made contributions to the enrichment of Armenian literature, especially by their numerous translations from Latin. But the books which they translated were tinged by ultra-denominational spirit. They were translated mostly for the purposes of sectarian propaganda. The "Theology of Albert" was one of the books translated. In spite of their ultra-sectarian nature, they served as a stimulus to the growth of scholastic thought in Armenia. The Armenian school at Datev became the center of Armenian scholasticism, and counteracted the activities of the Latin monastic orders.

But the criticism of the language of these translations is unanimous. For instance, even Zarphanelian, a representative member of the Armenian Catholic Mechitarist order of Venice, condemns the carelessness of the Latin Father Bartholomew, who with his imperfect knowledge of the Armenian language, made certain translations from Latin which "gave the first blow resulting in the degeneration of the Armenian classical language."[1] Another critic, Mr. Virtanes Papazian, evaluated the literary contributions of the Fratres Unitores in the following terms: "The Latin fathers who came under pretext of spreading illumination, but in reality worked for proselytism, were not satisfied only by bringing a corruption in the grammar of the Armenian language, and introducing new prefixes, new forms of the passive verb, etc.; but they also attempted to graft Latin words and verbs into the Armenian language."[1] Although these criticisms are justified, it must not be overlooked, on the other hand, that the classical Armenian already had begun to show signs of senility, even during the reign of the Cilician kings, who issued their edicts in an Armenian which was far inferior to the classical language of the Golden Age. New words, slang expressions, and foreign words and forms were abundantly used. And the added corruption introduced by the Fratres Unitores only served to precipitate the fall of the ancient Armenian which had become unintelligible to the illiterate masses of the Armenians. This was a natural process not only in the case of the Armenian but in the case of all European languages. The vernacular had to force its way and the sooner it came the better it would be for the common people.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, Vol. II, p. 8. Translated by the author.

B. The indirect influence of the Fratres Unitores was more significant. The activities of the Latin fathers, their zeal in establishing schools and translating Latin books, produced an Armenian school of reaction. The members of this school adopted the methods of their Latin adversaries, and tried to equal their eruditions. For no one denies the fine training of the Latin fathers who were educated in the Latin centers of scholasticism.

III. The Reaction in the Sunyatz School at Datev. The Sunyatz school did for theology and philosophy in Armenia what the University of Paris did for France, in the time of the Golden Age. It is alleged that Sahak and Mesrop gave them the exclusive right to interpret the Scriptures and to defend the faith. This school had seen good and bad days during the Middle Ages. Although there were a number of monasteries with their schools in the Sunyatz province, until the ninth century the principal school was found in the monastery of Shaghad. At this time the seat of higher learning was transferred to the monastery of Datev, which was built by Bishop John, A. D. 918, the builder also of libraries and schools. Historians assert that at this time there were about 500 brethren, and this number reached 1000. In 1299, when Bishop Stepanos, the historian, was the superior of the monastery, affairs were at their lowest ebb. But during the fourteenth century the Sunyatz monastery at Datev burst forth in splendor. This school represented the peak of Armenian medieval scholastic learning. The Latin missionaries have influenced the rapid growth of this school decidedly, even though only indirectly. They stimulated the leaders of the Sunyatz monastery to a feverish activity in organizing their school on a broader and higher scale. Indeed, as an organ of reaction against Latin encroachments, the Sunyatz school at Datev proved to be a formidable power.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, by Virtanes Papazian, p. 176. Translated by the author.

The Range of the Subjects of Study.—Orpelian[1] thus describes the erudition of Matousagha: "He had studied **poetry**, was an expert in **oratory** (rhetoric), mastered **philosophy**, full of all wisdom and learning."[2] Again, "**music** was highly advanced, **theology** was very rich, there were a host of **writers, painters** in that scientific and artistic environment."[3]

In **Louys**[4] we find a concise analysis of the character of philosophy as it was studied in the Sunyatz school. Philosophy had two branches, namely, Theoretical and Practical.

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[1] Quoted in Louys, under the editorship of Bishop P. Gulesserian, 1906, p. 416. Translated by the author.

[2] Italics are ours.

[3] Ibid, p. 417.

[4] Ibid

A. Theoretical philosophy was further divided under mental, physiological, and theological headings; and mental philosophy was subdivided under mathematical, musical, and astronomical headings.

B. Practical philosophy was divided into moral, economic, and political philosophies.

A **Philosopher** is said to be one who has studied external philosophy, such as Plato, Aristotle, etc.

A **Sophist** is one who has become a specialist in one line or another, such as grammar, astronomy, rhetoric; for example, the followers of Pyrrho.

A **Sage** is one who is wise by natural endowment.

In this school, philosophy was considered the handmaid of Christianity.

IV. **Great Masters.**—A. John Orodnetzi was one of the masters and leaders in the Sunyatz school. He taught especially in the Abragounyatz monastery. He received his education under Isaiah Nishetzi, the superior of the monastery of Kailatzor. The latter was a learned grammarian who had busied himself in writing comments on grammar. So was his pupil, Orodnetzi, who interested himself in the study of these subjects, and also made an analysis of Porphyry.

Many Armenian young men received a fine training under him. And one of his pupils, Thomas Mesopetzi[1] (p. 55), wrote concerning him in the following terms: "Orodnetzi shone like the sun . . . . and illumined everyone with his theological knowledge."

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[1] Quoted from Louys, 1906, p. 272. Translated by the author.

B. **Gregory of Datev** (1340-1420) was the most distinguished representative of the scholasticism in Armenia. He was the master mind of medieval learning. He was born at Vayotz Tzor in 1340 and received his education in the Abragounyatz monastery, where he studied for twenty-eight years. Later on he taught at Datev, where a great many ambitious young men came under his influence. Thomas Mesopetzi, one of his pupils, says that eighty students studied under Gregory of Datev. He was the interpreter of the Scriptures, the orator, and the philosopher. He was also one of the greatest foes of the activities of the Fratres Unitores in Armenia, and his chief work (Kirk Hartzmantz), "The Book of Questions," is the most authoritative work representing the scholastic learning in Armenia. It is a sort of religious encyclopedia. Besides this he also left two volumes of sermons, entitled "Amaran" and "Tzimeran," which embody the scholastic thought on religion and morals. To be sure, as in the case of all scholastic philosophers, one should not expect great depth of thought in his work. The schoolmen were famous in the Middle Ages for their subtle methods of thinking and argumentation, even though they were mostly barren of genuine content in thought. Gregory of Datev was not an exception to this general rule. At best, he imitated the philosophical and scholastic methods of the opposing school, the school of Latin Fratres Unitores, who introduced medieval scholasticism into Armenia. That the work of Ohan Orodnetzi and Gregory of Datev was effective is borne out by the fact that the Unitores party in Armenia was prevented from spreading; and, although they continued their activities for a few centuries, they dwindled to an insignificant minority. In 1750 part of them migrated to Italy, while the rest were engulfed by the great mass of the Armenian people.

The following quotation from the "Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar," written by a faithful Catholic Father, if read carefully, will show between the lines that the Latin influence in Armenia was limited and temporary:

> "This mission of the Friars Preachers, founded in the year 1328, spread to such an extent, that in time it counted 50 priories and 700 religious. Even in Pope Clement the Eighth's day there were 110 Dominicans of Armenian nationality. These were called 'Unifiers' because they tried to unite the Armenian and Latin rites and this progressive tendency, even in Armenian grammatical constructions, caused much aversion in the clergy, the people, and the court.
>
> "This fruitful mission, which took its place in Armenian Church History on account of the terrible persecutions and massacres by Ginghishkan, removed to Smyrna, and then to Galata in Constantinople. Thus it lost its importance for the Armenians. However, the Dominican mission to Mesopotamia did excellent work in southern Armenia and exists there until this day."[1]

Gregory of Datev was thus characterized by his pupil, Thomas Mesopetzi. "Our great Vartabet was a man of keen and strong intellect, and a fine logician. . . . . He was rich and fluent in his speech. No one was his equal in this respect . . . he was a second St. John Chrysostom."[2] Zarphanelian, after evaluating the work of Gregory of Datev as a teacher of the

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[1] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, translated by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 44.

[2] Quoted from Louys, 1906, p. 274. Translated by the author.

Sunyatz schools, adds: "It seems to us that for the fourteenth century he must be regarded as a man of sufficient knowledge and learning."[1] The chief merit of the school of Datev lies in the fact that the Armenian language was there at its best. It was "pure and better than the Armenian used by their adversaries."[2]

At any rate, to an impartial observer free from sectarian bias, the indirect influence of the Unitores was not altogether harmful to the progress of the Armenian race. True, they opened the flood-gates of endless controversies, but eventually this stimulated the Armenian leaders to turn to education and learning as an effective means of self-defense. In this way the Armenian schools at Datev, as well as similar schools in other centers flourished, and a number of choice leaders were trained in them. This indirect contribution was certainly beneficial to the cause of progress in Armenia, although the intensely sectarian controversies called for little more than the expenditure of human energy. But it must be added that they brought Armenia in contact with Latin culture and opened schools in the limited area of their activity and in addition to religion taught new subjects of study.

In the next chapter we shall discuss how this extraordinary activity later, during the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, gave way to an intellectual stupor. In this period Armenia was submerged in her darkest age, not only in political matters, but also in intellectual and educational fields of endeavor.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, Zarphanelian, Vol. II, p. 11. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Ibid.

CHAPTER XI

The Darkest Age of Armenian Education

I. The Long Siege of Darkness.—In the history of Armenian education the period beginning near the end of the fifteenth century may rightly be called the darkest age of Armenian cultural life. To the student of general European history, this might seem almost an anomalous fact. The only plausible explanation of this long siege of darkness in Armenia can be found in the analysis of the political situation prevailing in Armenia at this period.

The peculiar feature of this anomalous situation can be epitomized in one figurative statement. While Europe was being flooded with the glorious light of the Renaissance, Armenia was being bathed in endless bloodshed, as a result of the invasion of the barbarian hordes of central Asia. It is well known to the student of history that after the second half of the eleventh century certain tribes of Turks appeared on the horizon of Western Asia. During the thirteenth century, Tartars and Mongols invaded Armenia and Asia Minor. Wherever their feet trod not even an herb was left to tell the story of a living civilization. They glorified themselves by haughtily proclaiming that they were the "scourge of heaven." During the fourteenth century Timour, the ill-famed Tartar leader, laid waste the whole length of Asia Minor, including Armenia. During the fifteenth century, the Turks increased their warlike activities, and all kinds of nomadic races flooded Asia Minor. During the sixteenth century Armenia completely succumbed before the onslaughts of these Asiatic hordes, and the houses of the Armenian nobility, the natural leaders of the nation, were scattered everywhere, and finally vanished entirely from the horizon of the Armenian world.

Under these adverse political conditions, there was left only one interest of paramount importance for the Armenian nation. That was the problem of salvaging the shattered masses of population in order to preserve the existence of the people as a whole. It was natural, therefore, that the traditional love of the Armenian for the arts, learning, and education would die down all at once. Perhaps one finds a faint evidence of this even during the first quarter of the fifteenth century in the complaint of Gregory Khelatetzi, when he renounced teaching, saying, "I shall not occupy my time in teaching, because of the lack of interest in education shown by my people."[1] But the prevailing darkness was most oppressive during the sixteenth century. "The sixteenth century was a century of decadence not only for Armenia, but for the East in general. A strong power, which had threatened to capture the throne of the Byzantine empire[2] during the middle of the preceding century, had carried out its design. The Byzantine Empire, which in spite of its weakness had exercised a patronage over Christianity as well as over learning and the arts, fell completely before the attack of the Turkish sword. During an agitated and stormy period such as this, little attention could be given to education, and but few people engaged in educational activities. Only an Armenian Vartabet by the name of Parsegh (Basil) is mentioned who endeavored to reconstruct the Amrdolou monastery and encouraged the members of the order to live a life of contemplation and learning."[1]

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[1] Cf. Hayabadoum, by Alishan, p. 562. Translated by the author.

[2] The Turks captured Constantinople in 1453.

In this connection it must also be remembered that by the end of the Cilician kingdom Armenia was left without political organization, and at times even without a centralized ecclesiastical leadership. In the history of Armenia there came a time during the long siege of darkness when there were Armenian bishops at four or five centers, each of whom claimed to be the exclusive representative and head of the ecclesiastical authority. Although by the council of Etchmiadzin in 1441, the seat of the chief ecclesiastical authority was transferred from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin, the Katholikos of Cilicia had stubbornly opposed this move. Another factor which precipitated matters from bad to worse was the fact that the chief representatives of the ecclesiastical authority at Etchmiadzin were not men of ability. "From the days of Gregory Mogatzi (1443) the seat of the Katholikos at Etchmiadzin became a bone of contention among office-seeking clergymen. This condition was aggravated by the favoring circumstances prevailing in the political life of Armenia. Under the new political bosses, Ak-Koyounlou and Kara-Koyounlou princes, the seat of Etchmiadzin offered a pretext for bribery. A long line of cruel, ignorant, selfish clergymen occupied the throne one after the other, snatching from one another's hands the ecclesiastical authority. There came a time when Armenia had six men claiming the chief authority in the church. This period is the period of greatest decadence for the Armenian clergy."[1] This period embraces the years 1443-1600.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, Zarphanelian, Vol. II, p. 13. Translated by the author.

In a chaotic condition such as this, when on the one side Armenia was harassed politically and on the other hand was subjected to the futile contentions of her ecclesiastical authorities, what can one expect but a shameful reign of darkness, illiteracy, and ignorance?

II. **Glittering Light in the Colonies.**—We have already seen that after the fall of Ani (A. D. 1046), the capital of the Pagratid dynasty, a great number of enterprising Armenians emigrated to different parts of Europe. During the reign of the Cilician kings, Armenians again came into still closer contact with the European centers of commerce, and for commercial purposes established colonies[2] in Venice, Genoa, etc. Great masses of Armenian people, some encouraged by the warm invitations of the ruling princes of foreign countries, and others hoping to escape political and religious persecutions, emigrated to Italian cities such as Venice and Genoa, and to Crimea, Russia, Moldavia, Valakia, Poland, Transylvania, India, etc. Historians assert that there was a time when there lived in Poland 200,000 Armenians, in Theodosia (Crimea) 30,000, with corresponding numbers in other countries. The Armenians in Poland enjoyed special privileges as a reward for their constructive activities. We have seen that by special order of the Polish kings[3], the Armenian colonists were governed according to the national code, compiled by the Armenian Vartabet, Mechitar Kosh. At the present time there is only a vestige of these Armenian settlements left in Poland, Bessarabia, and Transylvania (now Roumania).

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Church, by Kevork Mesrop, p. 363, in Armenian. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Chapter VIII, Part II.

[3] Cf. Chapter VIII, Part V.

Alishan[1] mentions the names of a number of European cities in which the Armenians had established churches in the past. I shall only mention a few of these flourishing churches. In Rome (1240), St. Anne, St. Gregory, and St. Paul. In Florence (1250-1491), St. Basil. In Ancona (1261), The Holy Ghost, and St. Anastasias. In Vienna (1270), St. Mary. In Salerno (1283), St. John, and St. Cosmos. In Bologna (1303), St. Mary, St. John the Baptist, and The Holy Ghost. In Genoa (1307), St. Bartholomew. In Padua (1308), St. Mary. In Naples (1328), The Holy Ghost. In Venice (1348), St. John the Baptist and Holy Cross (1434). These churches, being situated in the very center of the European revival of learning with the constituencies, indirectly exerted an influence over Armenia, however faint that influence may have been. In fact, while Armenia was submerged in real darkness during the sixteenth century, the Armenian colonies took up the work of enlightenment and in a very material way contributed first to the development and spread of printing among the Armenians, and at a later period organized schools such as the schools of the Mechitarist order of St. Lazarus, Venice, and in this way paved the way for the eighteenth century awakening.

III. **The Development of Printing.**—The first engraved page was printed in Germany in 1423, the first movable types were used in 1438, and the first printed book was published in 1456.

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[1] This list can be seen also in **The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar,** translated into English by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 214.

The first Armenian publication, (Barzadoumar), "A Calendar," was printed in 1512, in Venice.

In 1513 four Armenian books were printed, and in the preface of one the name of the publisher is given as "the sinner Hagop." It asks that "he who reads this will please pray God for the forgiveness of his sins."

In 1565 Apkar Tbir of Tokad printed the Psalms in Armenian. Two years later he moved his types to Constantinople, and printed books there.

Hagop IV of Julfa (1655-1680), the Katholikos of Armenia, who established schools and seminaries, also encouraged the printing of Armenian books in Europe. In 1656, he sent to Europe Matthew Zsaretzi, an Armenian deacon, who set up a press in Amsterdam[1], Holland, and in 1660 published a hymn, "Jesus, the Son," written by Nerses the Gracious. Later on, Oskan and his brother took up his work there and published a Bible in Armenian. In 1666 he published an Armenian "Alphabet and Primer" and a "Grammar." Oskan transplanted his printing office to Marseilles in 1673. In 1674 Matthew Vanantetzi Ohanessian printed in Marseilles a "Rhetoric" written by John Holov. In 1675, and probably from the hand of one Solomon, a book was published entitled "The Art of Mathematics," "a complete and perfect book, translated for the use of Armenians, and especially for the needs of merchants . . . in the reign of Louis XIV, King of France."[2]

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[1] Owing to the well-known controversy between the Armenian and the Roman churches, the non-Catholic Armenian printers were persecuted in Catholic countries; therefore they chose Holland for their free activity.

[2] Quoted by Zarphanelian, p. 252. Translated by the author.

In 1696 a "Universal Atlas" was printed by Thomas Vanantetzi.

A printing press was set up in Etchmiadzin by Katholikos Simeon with the assistance of Gregory of Julfa. Simeon started the work in 1769, and it took five years to organize the business. He also established a paper mill in Etchmiadzin; the building for this purpose bears the date of 1776.

It is beyond our scope to relate here the story of the development of Armenian printing; suffice it to say that the Armenian awakening, which began during the seventeenth century and continued to grow in momentum during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the result of the spread of printed books in addition to other important factors of influence. The historian of Armenian education cannot help admiring the zeal of the Armenian colonies in establishing printing presses and in spreading the light which was hidden in the Armenian manuscripts, which had been forgotten during the sixteenth century.

The development of printing among the Armenian colonists also furthered the cause of Armenian journalism. Strange as it may seem, the first Armenian attempt at journalism, "Aztarar," a monthly, published by Father Haroutiun Shemavonian, came to light in 1794 in Madras, India, where a wealthy Armenian settlement flourished. In 1800-1802, in Venice, year-book was published by the Mechitarist father, Luke Injijian, and in 1803-1820, "Eghanag Puzantian" (Pasmaveb) was published in Venice. There followed a long line of Armenian journals, magazines, year-books, etc.

IV. **Jesuits in Armenia.**—In our previous chapter we have already discussed the work of the Latin Fratres Unitores, who were not very successful in spreading their influence in Armenia. In this chapter we wish to give a very concise history of the coming of the Jesuits to Armenia and the contributions they made to education.

Pope Gregory XV, in 1621, started, and later Pope Urban VIII, in 1627, fully organized in Rome a school for the propagation of the Catholic faith in non-Christian and non-Catholic countries. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Catholic missionaries had already invaded Armenia. But the results achieved by them were not commensurate with the efforts expended.

Paul of Bologna, a Catholic missionary to Armenia, who died in Spain, bequeathed his fortune for the purpose of establishing a school at Rome for the benefit of Armenian young men. For various reasons this school was not established. Instead, a provision was made by which a number of Armenian students were admitted in the College of Propaganda at Rome. In this way both native and foreign Catholic missionaries had an opportunity to come to Armenia to make converts. For this purpose Rome published a "Credo" in Armenian in 1642. They also published an "Alphabet and Primer" in 1643, and a grammar and logic by Galanos in 1645, evidently to be used as textbooks in Catholic schools.

The Jesuit missionaries to Armenia were at first well received by the Armenians, who admired the erudition of these Latin teachers, regardless of their religious doctrines. They opened schools at various centers, such as New Julfa and Shiraz. The teachers were trained in Rome, and at once took pains to learn the Armenian language. The most distinguished among them were Franciscos Rivola and Clement Galanos. The latter was especially well-versed. He was very active in Constantinople, the seat of the Armenian patriarchate[1], who had worked in Georgia and Armenia in 1636 and had come to Constantinople in 1640. Galanos was so clever and active that he won over to him the inclinations of two of the Armenian patriarchs, during the period of 1642-1658. His ulterior motive was found out and public opinion turned against him. Then he went to Rome, and for twenty years served there as professor of the Armenian language in the College of Propaganda. Another partisan of Galanos, Thomas Vartabet of Aleppo, had even succeeded in occupying the seat of the Armenian patriarchs in Constantinople, in 1644, but was forced to abdicate after two months. In 1655 he returned to Armenia and tried to regain the political authority of the Armenian patriarch. To achieve this he resorted to bribery. It would be beyond our scope to relate here the sad and long-drawn struggles between the Armenians and Latins. At times the extremists among the Armenians took desperate measures to check the activities of the papal missionaries. The fight was carried on up to 1821-1830. Finally the Catholic patriarchate of Zummar, Lebanon, was transferred in 1852 to Constantinople, where it obtained civil recognition and privileges enjoyed by other patriarchs. Thus the Armenian Catholics, a very small minority, were officially separated from the Armenian church and organized themselves into a separate community.

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[1] Armenian patriarchs represented the political authority of the nation and worked as intermediaries between the nation and the Ottoman Empire.

Besides making converts, the Jesuits were engaged in educational work, which only a limited number of Armenians were able to enjoy, because of the bitterness of the religious controversies. At the beginning of the World War, there were only 200,000[1] Armenian adherents of the Roman faith, a fact which throws significant light upon the extent of the Jesuit educational endeavors. Had the Jesuits limited their activity to the field of education in Armenia, they certainly would have achieved great results. It would have been much better for the cause of Christianitiy and humanity had such futile religious controversies not raged between Rome and Armenia, because both sides carried on the fight in anything but a Christian spirit. In evaluating the work of the Jesuits, Mr. Virtanes Papazian says: "It was expected that these teachers and this school would begin an educational activity on a larger scale and with greater zeal. But both the school and the printing press served religious purposes only.

"Catholic propaganda did not in any degree alleviate the prevailing ignorance (in Armenia). The people learned a little how to read certain religious books and they gained knowledge in the tenets of sectarian doctrines."[1]

In fairness to all, it must be pointed out that the Jesuit activities in Armenia indirectly achieved beneficial results. It roused the Armenian leaders from their lethargy and stimulated them to ardent activity. The counter-reaction movement in Armenia resulted in a gradual re-awakening. Then, the Jesuits opened an avenue of approach between Latin civilization and Armenia. And they opened schools in which were introduced various subjects of study. "For this reason they were not content to engage themselves only in the teaching of theological subjects, but they strove not to deprive the youth of the taste of other subjects. They taught them, and also wrote along these lines."[2]

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[1] Cf. History of the Armenian Church, by Archbishop Malakia Ormanian, p. 236.

[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, p. 271, by Virtanes Papazian. Translated by the author.

V. **Centers of Re-awakening.**—A. **Etchmiadzin.** The signs of a re-awakening on a small scale appeared during the pontificate of **Philip Katholikos** of Armenia, 1633-1655. He reconstructed the monastery at Etchmiadzin and established a school there. He appointed two capable teachers, Simeon of Julfa and Paul Piromalli, the latter a Latin missionary, to teach logic and philosophy. Simeon of Julfa was the author of a book on grammar, rhetoric, and logic; and he had already organized a school in New Julfa. Paul Piromalli was one of the Catholic missionaries who had learned Armenian. The fact that Philip Katholikos appointed him teacher in an Armenian school is evidence that at first the Jesuits were warmly welcomed by the Armenians, who appreciated their work in the field of education. Besides this there were also schools in Akoulis, Shorot and other centers of Persian Armenia. Stephen of Poland in his translation of (Dionysius) thus describes the school at Etchmiadzin: "At that time there were a great number of Vartabets (at Etchmiadzin) who were orators, religious poets, valiant men, learned, and men of erudition. One of these was Arakel Vartabet, who wrote the history of the Armenian kings and pontiffs in a very fitting manner."[1]

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[2] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, p. 171, by Zarphanelian, Vol. II. Translated by the author.

In New Julfa there were also signs of re-awakening. A school was established there, as well as in other places in the vicinity. And the significant fact about these schools is that they were intended mostly for the education not of the monks or clergymen, but of the children of the common people. In commenting upon the character of these schools, Father Hatzouni says, "In the few schools of this period we find the prototype of our national and parochial schools. They were opened by individual initiative and were supported by the aid of the people of the monasteries."[2]. It seems that these schools represented the transition period in Armenia. They were not exclusively religious schools; yet religious spirit was much in evidence. On the other hand, besides religion, languages and other secular subjects were being introduced, as is borne out by the information found in the history of Arakel of Tauriz, the historian of this period, and a product of the school of Etchmiadzin, established by Philip Katholikos, in 1633-1655. The awakening in New Julfa was not an extensive movement. It was the beginning of a revival on a small scale. "From the outside world came no assistance. For this reason the awakening of the seventeenth century was not per se anything of great significance from the point of view of literary and cultural progress in general. But for Armenia that modest and idealistic activity was something great; it pointed directly to a new epoch."[1]

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[1] Quoted in the History of Armenian Literature, by Zarphanelian, Vol. II, p. 132. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Education Among the Ancient Armenians, p. 123. Translated by the author.

B. **The Amrdolou Monastery.**—This institution came to prominence during the seventeenth century as a great center of learning. It was already an old school and had a good library and a collection of manuscripts. Parsegh Vartabet, the superior of this monastery, was a man of intellectual curiosity and learning. He had studied the "Philosophical Definitions" of David the Invincible as well as certain books produced during the Golden Age. He was also a student of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, and taught the same to his pupils. The historian of the period, Arakel of Tauriz, characterizes this man as a great and famous master having many pupils. Vartan Paghishetzi "not only rebuilt the monastery but took great pains to enrich it with a school as well as with theological books. The efforts of this man brought the monastery to the standing of a real university."[2]

This monastery became very famous during the eighteenth century because of the activity of one of its graduates, John Golod, who was appointed to act as the representative of the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem in Constantinople, in 1713. He was later chosen the Patriarch of Constantinople (in 1715). He opened a seminary in Scutari, which was an offshoot of the Amrdolou school. He desired to counteract the activities of the Catholic propagandists, not by bitter opposition but by arming the Armenian clergy with the intellectual weapons of the Latins. For this reason he emphasized the study of philosophy, theology, grammar, rhetoric, and logic in his school, and encouraged his pupils to make copious translations from Latin and Greek ecclesiastical books. "Under Golod, Constantinople was transformed, a literary movement was set in motion which kept up with his school."[1] Golod was a pupil of Vartan Paghishetzi, the superior of the monastery of Amrdolou, for whom he had an unbounded admiration, and prided himself as being a "pupil of the universal light," Vartan. For this reason he kept up the traditions of the Amrdolou institution in his new school at Constantinople. Bishop Gulesserian praises the work of Golod as a factor in the intellectual awakening and says, "The nation needed a school to prepare leaders. Golod organized such a school. The nation needed to become enlightened according to the spirit and needs of the century, and Golod did everything possible to meet these needs."[2] Again, "Whatever was left of the school of Golod forms the most valuable part of the (Armenian) national library of Galata (Constantinople), namely the section of the manuscripts and the oldest samples of Armenian printing."[3]

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[1] Cf. **The Jubilee of the Armenian Book**, by Leo, p. 78. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. **Golod, Patriarch John**, Papken Vartabet Gulesserian, p. 3. Translated by the author.

In this way, the school of Golod strove to prepare an educated clergy to lead the nation not only in religious questions, but also in intellectual and political affairs. He also enriched the Armenian literature by various translations, accomplished by his school. He preached above all a spirit of toleration in religious questions, and in this respect his school was much better than the school of Datev, under Gregory of Datev. The achievements of one of the graduates of this institution, Nalian, Patriarch of Constantinople, certainly speak eloquently of the character of the training received there.

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[1] Ibid, p. 52.

[2] Cf. Golod, Patriarch John, P. Gulesserian, p. 93. Translated by the author.

[3] Ibid, p. 100.

CHAPTER XII

The Mechitarist Congregation as a Factor in the Awakening

In the preceding chapter we touched upon the general, gradual movement toward an awakening, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and we found this movement centered especially around the monastery of Etchmiadzin, as well as in the prosperous commercial centers of New Julfa, and, in general, in that section of Armenia which came under the rule of Persia. We saw, also, that the Jesuit missionaries in this territory had stirred the Armenian ecclesiastical leaders to activity, and the monastery of Amrdolou had rendered great service in preparing leaders like John Golod, Patriarch of Constantinople; Krikor[1], the Chain-bearer, Patriarch of Jerusalem; and Patriarch Nalian of Constantinople, who was an illustrious graduate from the famous school of Scutari, established and supported by the efforts of John Golod.

In this general awakening, the rôle of Mechitar and the far-reaching influence of the religious order founded by him is certainly worthy of special study and discussion. For the contributions of this small group of Armenian Catholic monks have been full of significance, and are far greater than the work and influence of the Latin Jesuit missionaries, whose paramount motive and aim was to make converts at any cost.

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[1] The Armenian monastery of Jerusalem was laboring under an enormous debt. Krikor, the Patriarch, put heavy chains about his neck and journeyed for seven or eight years in Armenia collecting a fund for the payment of debts.

The Armenian monks belonging to the order of Mechitar, although genuinely Catholic in their religious beliefs, were on the whole actuated by a yearning desire, namely, to educate and enlighten the Armenian nation. With them the sectarian propaganda was therefore reduced to a minimum and the educational and cultural activities were pushed to a maximum development.

I. The Life and Ideals of Mechitar.—Mechitar was born in Sebaste, in Asia Minor, in A. D. 1676, on the seventeenth of February, and died in 1749 in Venice, Italy, on the island of St. Lazarus, in the monastery which he founded. His parents, Armenians of good standing, were anxious to give him an education and

". . . . when he was five years old, they procured him a master in the person of a good priest, who had to teach him to read and to recite his prayers by heart. . . . . he showed an extrordinary capability and in a short time learned to read correctly. He made a study of handwriting and soon wrote and copied with rapidity."[1] . . . "When Mechitar was ten years old, his parents saw that the good priest to whom they had entrusted their son's education was no longer a help to him. The young boy would ask about spiritual things and the Sacred Scriptures, and his instructor wouldn't, to his great confusion, know what to answer. But to whom[2] could one turn then, when colleges and parochial schools were wanting?

"At this time, under the Islamic domination of the Persians and Turks, there were no such things as Christian public schools, and any one who wished a literary or theological education was obliged to frequent some monastery where doctors, called in Armenia "Vardapiets," gave private lessons in grammar, philosophy, and theology. These, under the vow of chastity, lived in monasteries outside of and far away from the cities, and there also resided with them a bishop as superior, who was, moreover, as a rule, the Ordinary of the diocese.

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[1] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, first written in Italian by Father Minas Nurikhan, and then translated into English by Rev. John McQuillan, 1915, St. Lazarus' Island, Venice, p. 29.

[2] This statement indicates the deplorable condition of educational affairs in Armenia at this period.

"The priests who dwelt in the city and were married, and who formed the secular clergy, generally had had a poor education. The Vardapiets, who alone had permission to preach, often travelled from one monastery to another, taking with them some pupil. These disciples were taught gratuitously but were obliged in return to serve their master. When they had arrived at a certain age or a certain proficiency in study, if they had the intention of remaining monks, they were ordained priests by the bishop of the monastery. They then continued to prepare themselves for preaching, and after a kind of examination and a testimony of capability presented by the people, they received the doctor's degree, with a peculiar ecclesiastical ceremony, which entitled them to carry about the doctor's "staff" and they were called Vardapiets."[1]

We have made this lengthy quotation here, because it depicts beautifully the kind of education which was open for the abbot Mechitar, who was eager to learn everything he could. This gives the general setting in which Mechitar's growth took place. After leaving his teacher, namely, the Armenian priest, he came under the tutorship of two sisters, Manasse and Mary. At the age of fourteen he entered the Armenian monastery of Sourp-Nishan (Holy Cross) in the vicinity of Sebaste, the superior of which was Bishop Anania. After staying there for a time, he wanted to continue his education and travelled the length of Asia Minor, intending to go to Etchmiadzin. From now on he travelled back and forth, and in Erzeroum as well as in Aleppo made personal contact with Latin missionaries and through their influence planned to go to Rome to complete his education. But he was unable to do so. He was ordained doctor (Vartabet) by Bishop Markar. It is beyond our scope to give all the details of his life; we shall touch upon only the most significant events. In 1697 he began to preach in the Armenian church, St. Gregory the Illuminator, of Galata, Constantinople. He was persecuted by the Armenian patriarchs for his leaning toward Roman Catholicism. So he escaped from Constantinople. During his second visit there, in 1700, he was persecuted again for the same reason, and took shelter in a monastery of Capuchins. In 1701 he organized an Armenian Benedictine order by the name of St. Anthony. In 1702 he took his pupils with him and went to Smyrna, and from there to the island of Morea, which was under the rule of the Republic of Venice. He received from the political rulers of the island the fortress of Methone and some property attached to it for income. The order was affirmed by the pope in 1712. But owing to the war between Turkey and the Republic of Venice, in 1715, Mechitar was compelled to move his monastery to a safer and better location. He was given the island of St. Lazarus in Venice, and in 1717 he founded his monastery there. This monastic order is now known as the Mechitarist Congregation of Venice, as well as of Vienna; for in 1773, dissension set in, and a branch of the Mechitarist Congregation was organized in Trieste, and in 1881 it was transferred to Vienna.

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 31.

A. **The Aims of Mechitar.**—"Mechitar the Great had three aims when he organized his small congregation—religious, educational, and literary."[1] Father Zarphanelian completes the picture by adding: The purpose of Mechitar was "to bring the Armenian nation in contact with Europe, but without extinguishing the national spirit; to love his nation and just for that reason to borrow from European science and enlightenment that which might not prove antithetical and injurious to the spirit of the nation. . . . . To achieve this purpose and to promote education among the Armenians, he paid attention to two things —apostleship and scholarly learning. He did not wish to separate mind from soul, because he was guided by the constant thought that it was necessary to have two wings in order to fly and soar up to greater heights."[2]

B. **Mechitar as Teacher.**—We are here not concerned with Mechitar's religious aspirations and efforts. It is enough to know that he laid greater emphasis on the spreading of scholarship and learning rather than on devoting his energies to the apostleship of his particular tenet of theological doctrines.

Thus he rendered a very valuable service in initiating a movement of enlightenment and a love for learning and education among his people. Because this was his chief desire, he devoted his life to teaching his pupils, preparing text-books in Armenian, and systematizing in scientific form, namely in a grammar, the vernacular language of his native land. Of course, he devoted part of his energies to build up his monastery and to work for the financial support of that institution. But primarily he was a pioneer teacher, and in his monastic school were taught not only theology but also languages, grammar, logic, philosophy, and even sciences. "Mechitar, who in the foundation of the Congregation had to instruct everyone, watch over everything, and see for himself if all were progressing towards the great end,—he alone, besides the masters, had the keys of the Novitiate and the Professed-House. He often went in to keep a vigilant eye over the education of the scholars, their behavior towards one another and towards their superiors or professors. Not a few times he would take part in their recreation because in this way one comes to know men's characters better, above all, if they are young people. Among his little children he was familiar and grave, severe and kind, loved and admired. When he came among them during their free hours, he insisted on their continuing their innocent, genial and instructive games, and according to tradition, had translated for this purpose the book of "Spiritual Games" which he had seen in a Franciscan monastery, and which on his death was corrected and printed. By means of these games the whole catechism was learnt in a very pleasant way."[1]

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[1] Cf. The Two Centuries of Literary Activity of the Mechitarist Congregation, in Armenian, by Father Parsegh Sarkissian, p. 1. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, Vol. II, pp. 320, 321. Translated by the author.

Although Mechitar was a progressive teacher and adapted his methods of teaching to the best practices that he could find, he was a devotee of monastic ideals and training. Therefore, "he directed his whole attention against useless talk on the part of the novices, the professed, or the priests. He sought in all things to remove from his disciples all inclination to vain and earthly things, that they might long ever more for the contemplative life and for the studies necessary for their calling, wherewith they might one day be of some use to their brethren and countrymen. He taught them to unite themselves inseparably with their divine Saviour with all the joy of their soul, in dying to the world and living in Christ, for this is true life, and to this perfection one attains by meditating on the eternal verities personified in Jesus."[1]

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[1] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, in English, translation by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 300.

C. **The Discipline of Mechitar.**—As would be expected of a monk, he insisted upon the strictest obedience and in this connection purposely created occasions to hurt the pride of his pupils:

> "In this connection it is related by Father Matthew and Archbishop Akonz, Mechitar's second successor, that the students in philosophy had, with his permission, constructed the whole solar system in box-wood, with a contrivance executed with wonderful intelligence and beauty. There was the equator, the meridian, the twelve signs of Zodiac, the Arctic and Antarctic circles, the constellations, the solstices and other accessories, and in the center the earth. This was all set in motion round the sun by an ingenious mechanism. Abbott Mechitar was very much pleased with it, praised the progress they had made and encouraged their skill. But afterwards he summoned the novice master to his cell, and, whilst expressing his satisfaction at this piece of machinery, added that he would be more pleased if, mortifying their pleasure, they were to consign the construction to flames. How great was his joy on hearing, a few minutes later, that scarcely had the young students heard of their Abbot's wish, than most joyfully they obeyed it. Then the Servant of God went back to them and told them the joy of his heart at such abnegation, practiced so spontane-

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 301.

ously, praised their obedience, blessed them, and returned to his cell very happy."[1]

II. **The Educational Program of Mechitar and of His Followers.** — Had he been perfectly satisfied with this type of monastic training and if he had done nothing more, it can hardly be conceived that his influence would have been so wide-spread among the Armenians in all parts of the world. Armenia already had such monastic schools from the time of the Introduction of Christianity. Mechitar's contributions to monastic education would have been praiseworthy, but not exceptionally significant. However, he emphasized other subjects of study, such as the **Armenian history and language,** which remained the most characteristic feature of the Mechitarist education. In order to realize the far-reaching importance of the emphasis laid upon these subjects, one need only bring before his eyes the chaotic conditions prevailing in Armenia at this period. The most lamentable fact in this state of affairs was that the Armenian nation had lost her temporal power and was in danger of losing also her national solidarity, cohesion, and community of ideals. In short, there was a decided lack of "like-mindedness," so necessary for a unified population, in the development of national life, as advocated by Professor Giddings of Columbia University. It was an imperative task to bring order out of chaos. "It was necessary to work for the regeneration of such a nation. It was necessary to remind them of the forgotten past, so that they would realize the wretched conditions in which they were living.

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[1] Cf. The Life and Times of Abbot Mechitar, in English translation, by Rev. John McQuillan, p. 302.

It was necessary to re-awaken the memories of the glorious past of the brave ancestors so that the new generation would be imbued with the ideals of their ancestors."[1]

Just as in the Renaissance, Dante, Petrarch, and others searched for the old manuscripts of Greek and Latin literature, so in the revival of Armenian learning, Mechitar and his Congregation endeavored to collect the hidden treasures of Armenian literature, preserved in hundreds of manuscripts. In this cultural effort the part of the Mechitarists really has been noteworthy. Even today the best publication of the ancient classics of Armenian literature can be obtained from the printing office of the Mechitarists of Venice and Vienna. Almost one-half of the primary source books used for carrying out this research in the history of the Armenian education were published by the Mechitarist press. Zarphanelian, himself a Mechitarist, in this connection gives the summary of the achievements of the Mechitarists: "To render a useful service to the nation, the Mechitarist Congregation endeavored to encourage the development of the Armenian language, to interpret and clarify Armenian history, and to publish historical documents; and by publishing the works of the ancient Armenian authors, they tried to make them accessible to all and to make everyone familiar with the antiquities and memoirs of the Armenian nation after subjecting them to the searchlight of analysis and examination."[1]

The influence of Mechitar was especially fruitful and beneficial in this direction. It encouraged the development of a consciousness of national ideals and a general desire for a re-awakening.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Literature, Vol. II, p. 326. Translated by the author.

III. Literary Contributions of Mechitar and the Mechitarists.—In order to achieve his great purpose, Abbot Mechitar first set himself the task of writing a grammar of classical Armenian. This was published in 1730. His pupils and succeeding generations of the Mechitarists devoted their best energies to the purification of classical Armenian. He wrote also an Armenian dictionary, a necessary tool for linguistic study. He also wrote a book containing the elements of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, accounting, music, metaphysics, although this was not published. This was intended to serve as a textbook. He also wrote a book on philosophy, mostly translated from a similar work of Aristotle. This was not published, but it was used as a textbook. He also edited a rhetoric, also unpublished.

But in addition to these valuable works, he was

> "the first to recognize the greatness of the mission of the vernacular used by the Armenians of the West, in Asia Minor, and he realized the rôle which it was to play. Of course, before his time, some unpublished works had been written in that vernacular. But no one had been able to write a grammar for that vernacular and to teach the vernacular speech in a regular fashion, much less to print books in it and make it common to all. The Armenian journalistic press during the first quarter of the nineteenth century struggled to get along with the old classical language, whereas Mechitar, almost a century in advance, began to lay the foundation of the modern vernacular language for the western portion of Armenia, through the large grammar which he edited. And in 1727 he published an

abridged[1] form of it under the title, "The Door of Grammar to the Modern Language of the Armenians."[2]

The history of the development of modern Armenian is extremely interesting. Besides the Mechitarists, the American missionaries took a considerable part, which will be discussed by us in its proper order. And the Armenian journalists of Constantinople and Smyrna made still greater contributions. But the disciples of Mechitar assiduously kept up the study and the popularization of modern Armenian, even though they made their most notable contributions to Armenian literature in the field of the classical language. However, the contributions of Fathers Michael Tchamtchian, Injijian, Avcherian, and in more recent periods, those of Ayvazovski and Alishan are worthy of praise. The vernacular language was printed for the first time in a book published in Venice, from 1685-87, at the request of Kul-Nazar, a prominent merchant of Julfa. It was "The Elucidation of the Psalms of David." After Mechitar the most notable contribution to the development of the Armenian vernacular was made by Father Arsen Aydinian of the Mechitarist Congregation of Vienna in "The Critical Grammar of the Modern Armenian" (1866).

IV. Results of the Mechitarist Monastic Education.—During the two centuries of productive life of the congregation, many illustrious religious and literary as well as scientific men flourished. However, their greatest achievements were accomplished in the study of the history, geography, and archaeology of Armenia, although their products in the field of literature in general have also been significant. They count among their distinguished men such luminaries as Father Tchamtchian, the historian; Father Arsen Pagradouni, the great Hellenist and translator of Greek and Latin literary masterpieces; Father Aydinian, the grammarian of modern Armenia; and Father Alishan, the illustrious poet and research scholar in the history and geography of Armenia. They have even produced a few scientific specialists whose merit has been recognized by European scientific academies and societies, such as Fathers Luke Injijian, in archaeology and geography; Gabriel Avedikian, in theology and philosophy; Mesrop Aghachiraghian, in chemistry and mineralogy; Michael Tchamtchian, in history; Vartan Hovsepian, in mathematics and astronomy; Har. Aucherian, in foreign languages, and Father Khoren Sinanian, in astronomy.

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[1] Cf. **Ibid.** Although Schroeter, the Hollander, had published in 1711, a **Synopsis Linguæ Civilis Armenorum**, a brief grammar of the eastern vernacular, it represented the vernacular language spoken by the Persian Armenian colonists living in Amsterdam and it had nothing to do with the vernacular of the Western or of Armenian spoken in Asia Minor.

[2] Cf. **The Literary Activity of Two Centuries of the Mechitarist Congregation of Venice,** p. 121, Father Parsegh Sarkissian. Translated by the author.

The most productive period of the Mechitarist activity is accurately described by Malakia Ormanian, himself a profound scholar, and former professor of the Armenian monastery of Armash and Patriarch of Constantinople. In speaking of the time (1800) of Abbot-general Akonz, who served as abbot for twenty years, he says, "The Mechitarists may feel proud of his productive activity, and the Armenian nation remembers his name with praise for his labors, for his influence, for his direction of affairs, for his orientation, and for his encouragement of Armenian literature. He produced during the period when he was the educational leader and abbot, the following disciples: Hov. Zohrabian, Luke Injijian, Mgrditch Aucherian, Ignacious Papazian, Manouel Chakhchakhian . . . . and also Mesrop Aghachiragian, Haroutiun Aucherian, Minas Phujishgian, Arsen Pagradouni, Eprem Setian, Kevork Hurmuzian, Peter Bedrosian, Minassian, Vartabets who form a junior group and all of whom are famous in the literary world."[1]

They produced many other celebrities, too numerous to mention. And today, although the Congregation is not enjoying the high prestige of the former days, yet the following men are well known to the Armenians for their literary works and deserve our appreciation: Fathers Arsen Ghazikian, Simeon Eremian, Der Movsesian, Hatzouni, etc., in Venice; and eminent men like Fathers Hagopos Dashian, Menevishian, and others in Vienna.

European scholars and others who have devoted their lives to the study of Armenian history, language, and literature, such as Carl Friedrich Neuman, Le Vaillant Florival, Hi Petermann, Ed. Dulaurier, Victor Langlois, and others have been proud to be honored with the title of honorary membership in the Mechitarist Academy.

A rapid perusal of a list of their publications demonstrates the fact that they have cultivated every field of intellectual endeavor. In this connection a well-known linguist of ancient and modern Armenian, who died a few years ago, very aptly says, "In our time, namely, since 1845, when I was just opening my eyes to light, the intellectual food of the Armenian nation was supplied entirely by the Mechitarists. No matter what books came into our hands, they were published in Venice or Vienna. . . . . The pedagogical books, grammars, rhetorics, logics, dictionaries, philosophies, poetical works, geographies, maps, globes, histories, even the professional books, not to mention the books on religion and commentaries, all of them were the production of the Mechitarist Congregation."[1]

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[1] Cf. Azkabadoum, in Armenian, Vol. III, p. 3407. Translated by the author.

They have not only enriched Armenian literature by their original works, but also have translated the works of Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Xenophon, Plutarch, Virgil, Tacitus, Cicero, Seneca, Fenelon, Dante, Milton, Corneille, Racine, Alfiery, Lamartine, and even Milton and Shakespeare.

In summarizing their contribution, one is tempted to conclude that they have endeavored to educate the Armenian people not so much through their limited number of schools and students, but through their literary products and good textbooks. We agree with the late Professor H. Ananikian, who explained this point by saying that "the Mechitarist Congregation of Venice had a purpose, namely, the education of the people. In addition to their schools, they have endeavored to carry their purpose into execution through their press. The book is a school that can enter into every house and adapt itself to almost all economic conditions."[2]

V. The Mechitarist Schools.—The Mechitarist Congregation was primarily founded as a monastic order with the purpose of spreading enlightenment among the Armenians. It was not exclusively a teaching order, such as those founded by Lasalle and Loyola. Therefore, although they have contributed to the education of the Armenians in general, they did not reach the large mass of the people through the educational institutions established on a large scale. However, in spite of this fact, they organized a few preparatory schools in a few communities, and in addition to this, they were fortunate in securing a permanent and adequate fund for the establishment of a higher institution for young laymen.

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[1] Cf. Article on "The Mechitarists of Venice", by Dr. Haroutiun Tiryakian Khan, Gotchnag, Vol. XVIII, No. 1. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Article on "The Mechitarists of Venice" in Gotchnag, Vol. XVIII, No. 1. Translated by the author.

Mourad-Rapaelian College.—This institution of higher learning stands as the most outstanding achievement of the Mechitarist Congregation of Venice. Time and space do not permit us to set forth in detailed fashion the history[1] of the establishment of this institution. The long struggles in which the Mechitarist fathers had to engage, in order to obtain the fund from the heirs of Edward Raphael and Samouel Mourad, and the heated controversies between the two factions of the Mechitarists over the management of this fund belong to the dead past. The chief point of interest is that the Mourad-Rapaelian college played an important part in the Armenian Renaissance of the nineteenth century.

Regarding the important phases of the Mourad-Rapaelian college, as well as the educational work of the Mechitarists in general, Mr. Vanadour[2] reports from Paris a very important interview which he recently had with two representative Mechitarist Fathers of Venice who are now in Paris, making inquiries in regard to a location for an Armenian Lyceé, which they are planning to establish there. The following is a summary of the report:

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[1] Cf. The Life and Work of Edward Raphael and Samouel Mourad, in Armenian, by Father Sahag Der Movsesian, 1928.

[2] Cf. Baikar, Armenian daily of Boston, 1928, Oct. 7, No. 236, Vol. VI.

The funds for the Mourad-Rapaelian college proceeded from the respective bequests of Mouradian and Rapaelian, two Armenian merchants of India, the total sums consisting of 1,100,000 and 600,000 francs. The bequests were made at the beginning of the eighteenth century. But thirty years passed before the Mechitarists were able to secure the fund. Thereupon they opened the Rapaelian school in Venice and the Mouradian school in Padua. But fearing the interference of the Austrian authorities, they transferred the school to Paris, in 1846. After the war of 1870 the school was moved again to Venice, and combining the two separate schools, the Mourad-Rapaelian college was established there.

In place of the school at Paris, the Mechitarists established preparatory schools at various times in Pera, Kadi-Keug, Smyrna, Trebizond, and in Moush.

At the present time, besides the Mourad-Rapaelian College of Venice, the Mechitarists have schools for the Armenians in Venice, in Milan, and in Pera. In the school at Venice are 84 students, 40 of them free of tution, 30 paying half of their tuition, and 14 paying full tuition. In the school at Pera are 100 students. The one at Milan is an industrial school for orphans.

As the original funds of the Mourad-Rapaelian bequests have now trebled, the Mechitarists have just opened an Armenian Lycee in Paris for the benefit of Armenian refugee boys scattered in various parts of Europe, Palestine, and Syria.

In answering a questionnaire in regard to the Mechitarist schools, Bishop Karekin Khachadourian[1], a former student of the Mourad-Rapaelian school and later a graduate of Armash Seminary, now at the head of the California diocese of the Armenian church, writes briefly:

"The program of studies of the college of Mourad-Rapaelian is almost purely scientific. Furthermore, the subjects pertaining to the study of the Armenian language and literature with all its various ramifications have a place in it. It must be kept in mind that mostly those students who have studied previously in the Mechitarist schools at different places, are admitted to this institution. In these preparatory schools the students are sufficiently trained in subjects dealing with national affairs. The Mourad-Rapaelian school is almost an upward continuation of those preparatory schools. The pupils of this college, whether they belong to the Armenian or Catholic churches, have the imprint of a national spirit and culture, and also have good conduct and deportment.

"The school has the rank of a 'lycee,' and the graduates are admitted to the state universities without an examination. If I am not mistaken, they enjoy the same privilege of admission to other universities.

"This school is situated in Venice, Italy, under the surveillance of the Mechitarist fathers, according to the stipulations laid down by the testators. Before the World War they had preparatory schools also in Constantinople, Bardizag, Trebizond, and Moush. At the present time they have a preparatory school in Constantinople; and they are planning to open another school in Paris, and probably others in Syria and Egypt.

Highly distinguished Italian teachers have been employed to teach sciences in the Mourad-Rapaelian school. The following eminent Armenian men have at various times held the position as dean, and also as professor of the Armenian language, history, and literature: Fathers Alishan, Kachouni, Gabriel Ayvazovski, Minas Nourikhan, etc. Among the old graduates I can cite, without regard to the chronological order, the following: M. Beshiktashlian, T. Terzian, M. Ajemian, Serabion Tughrlian, B. Atamian, M. Pasha Portoukalian, M. Mamourian, Hovhannes Sakiz Pasha, and others who have played a considerable rôle in our national renaissance, especially through their writings.

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[1] In a letter to the author of this study.

"The educational contributions of the Mechitarists, in promoting the general culture of the Armenian nation, have been satisfactory and worthy of appreciation."

CHAPTER XIII

American Missionaries and their Contributions to Armenian Education

In the great Renaissance of the Armenian people during the course of the nineteenth century, American missionaries played a very creditable part. While Mechitar and the monastic order founded by him brought to the consciousness of the Armenian nation in a most efficient way, the splendors of the past achievements of the race, modest though they were, the missionaries hailing from the United States pointed out to the Armenian people the glorious possibilities of the future lying just before them. As we have seen in previous chapters, the coming of the Latin missionaries into Armenia, though not very fruitful as far as immediate results were concerned, at least brought the Armenians out of their isolated position, and opened avenues of approach between the Latin and Armenian races and their civilizations. The coming of the American missionaries to Armenia meant more than that. They not only opened broader avenues of approach in the life of the Armenian people to the more vigorous civilization of the United States of America; but they left a deep impression upon the immediate cultural life of the Armenian people, on a larger scale and according to a characteristically American standard of efficiency. Therefore, the various phases and features of this irresistible force of progress which made its inroads into the life of the Armenian nation is worth analyzing.

I. **The Coming of the Missionaries.**—"The early missionaries were sent out to investigate and explore."[1] In 1819 Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons were sent to investigate this vast country, lying between the Mediterranean and Black Seas and extending as far east as the heart of Persia and as far south as Mesopotamia and Palestine. They landed at Smyrna in 1820. The period between 1820 and 1830 may be called one of exploration.

Rev. Levi Parsons, one of the investigators, came in contact with Armenians in Jerusalem[2] in 1821; as a result two Armenian bishops, Dionesius Garabetian and Hagop Lustratzi, accepted protestant evangelistic doctrines.

In 1831, Rev. William Goodell, "The Father of the Armenian Mission," settled in Constantinople. Rev. Dwight followed him the next year.

In 1839 "The Armenian Evangelical Union," a secret organization, had twenty-three members. The purpose of this organization was to introduce necessary reforms into the old Armenian church.

Owing to various causes this organization was subjected to vigorous persecutions on the part of the Armenian ecclesiastics. In short, fanaticism on both sides made matters worse.

In 1839 Hagopos, the adjunct patriarch of Constantinople, issued a patriarchal bull forbidding the reading of all books printed or circulated by the missionaries. The Greek patriarch issued a similar bull to all Greeks, with a decided effect.

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[1] Cf. Daybreak in Turkey, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 119. A readable and concise story of the work of the American missionaries in western Asia.

[2] The Armenian church has very valuable possessions in the Holy Land. In Jerusalem they have a monastery where ancient manuscripts and old printed books are preserved. This is the seat of the Armenian patriarchate as well as a school of theology.

In April, 1839, another bull was issued by the Armenian patriarch, anathemizing and excommuning adherents to the American protestant missionary ideas and enterprises. On January 25, 1846, a bull of excision was read against Priest Virtanes, an evangelical Armenian. On the 21st of June, 1846, a bull of excommunication was issued. On July 1st, 1846, the first Armenian evangelical church was established. In November, 1847, a "firman" was issued recognizing the Armenian protestants as a separate community. In 1850 Sultan Abdul Medjid issued a decree which finally confirmed it.

II. **Their Real Purpose.**—The American missionaries established a number of stations in all important sections of Armenia as well as in western Asia. The real "purpose of the American Board in its efforts was not to weaken the old Gregorian[1] church or to proselyte from it. There was no desire to form among the Armenians an evangelical or Protestant church. There was no purpose to form any organization among them, but simply to introduce the New Testament in the spoken tongue of the people, and to assist them in working out reforms in their old church, and under their own leaders."[2] Even though this was the real purpose of the American missionaries, and we have no reason to doubt the sincere humanitarian and Christian motives actuating it, unfortunately the missionaries were partly frustrated in their efforts to carry out their real purpose; the result was the formation of a separate Armenian protestant community, which did not grow in numbers to any considerable degree. In 1911 the total number[1] of the Armenian protstants was approximately eighty thousand. Following the aftermath of the Great War, this number was reduced to thirty to forty thousand. The reason for this small number is found in the fact that "the Armenians are scarcely less protestant than themselves (American missionaries) in their attitude towards the Church of Rome."[2] All that the Armenians needed was a real re-awakening in the spheres of intellectual activities, and naturally the desired reforms in the old church would have been carried out on a large scale. The early American missionaries probably were misled from their regular path by the extremist advice of the early native zealots. However, the American missionaries were not slow in realizing that the real field of their activities was not found in the formation of new churches, but in the education of the masses. To the great credit of the broad-minded representatives of the American missionaries, it must be emphatically stated that they devoted their best energies to this most fruitful field. In describing the educational activity of the American missionaries, in Van, Mr. H. G. B. Lynch gives the following authoritative testimony: "I understand that the making of proselytes is not a special or paramount object of the teaching which they dis-

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[1] Cf. History of the Armenian Church, in Armenian, by Malakia authorities in Armenian history. It refers to the church which was enlightened by the influence of Gregory the Illuminator.

[2] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, Vol. II, p. 94, by H. F. B. Lynch.

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[3] Cf. History of the Armenian Church, in Armenian, by Malakia Ormanian, written first in French, then translated into Armenian and English, p. 237. Translated by the author.

[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, Vol. II, p. 94, by H. F. B. Lynch.

pense."[1] And in the case of the International College at Smyrna, this fact is made especially clear. "The aim has always been, while emphasizing the essential truths of the Christian faith, to avoid a spirit of antagonism towards the old eastern communions represented by the Greek Orthodox and Gregorian Armenian Churches. This attitude has gained for the college the sympathy and patronage of these communions to such an extent that it has been impossible to provide accommodation for the ever-increasing number of applicants for admission."[2]

III. The General Educational Work of the American Missionaries.—Had American missionary work in Armenia been guided by a narrow motive, namely, the making of converts, their influence would have been very limited, and their service would have been very small. But their purpose was larger and nobler, namely, to educate the masses of the Armenian people.

Even in its early beginnings ,before the disastrous separation took place, the Armenian young men of a penetrating mind, under the influence of the missionaries, had seen the urgent need of educating the Armenian clergy and leaders. In this way, the "Pashtimaljian" school was established. The goal of this school was that "no Armenian priest should be ordained in Constantinople who had not completed a regular course of study in that school. . . . This school exerted a strong influence in preparing the minds of a large body of young men to receive the truth and later to become leaders in the movement towards reform. Pashtimaljian himself was an Armenian of remarkable ability and strength. He was an accurate scholar and a critical student of the Armenian language and literature, and although a layman, was well versed in eastern theology and church history."[1] A number of men of prominence received their training at the feet of this teacher. Most of these graduates became leaders in the protestant movement in Armenia. Among these were Rev. Apisoghom Utujian, Dr. S. Der Minassian, and Sarkis Hovhannessian; the last named acted as translator in the work of "The Treasury of Useful Knowledge" (Eshdemaran Bidany Kidelyatz), in 1845. Another pupil of Pashtimaljian, "Senekerim Der Minassian later on went to New York, and was the first Armenian to receive a medical diploma there, in 1844, and returning to Constantinople, he practiced medicine until his death in 1853."[2]

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[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, Vol. II, p. 93.

[2] Cf. The Higher Educational Institutions of the Board, p. 39.

However, after the separation took place as described above between the progressives and the conservatives, the American missionaries felt the necessity of establishing American schools, the number and influence of which grew as the years went by.

IV. Specific Educational Institutions of the American Missionaries.—There is no doubt that the most valuable and lasting service of the American missionaries was rendered in the field of education.

A. **Elementary Schools.**—Indeed, actuated by the same spirit as the Calvinistic Puritans of New England, these missionaries not only established in Armenia a number of liberal arts colleges, which were seminaries at first, but they also initiated a very praiseworthy movement of popular education in the provinces and even in the remotest corners of Armenia. If the common people at large were to comprehend the new ideas, etc., they needed at least to be trained to read the Armenian vernacular Bible, which was translated by an American scholar of note, Dr. Elias Riggs. The Bible in the ancient classical Armenian was a masterly work, but the common people were not able to read and understand it. This made necessary a vernacular Bible, and a vast literature of religious tracts. This the American missionaries provided for the common people of Armenia. They also energetically set about to establish vernacular schools throughout the country. As we shall see in our succeeding chapters, in this work they were not to be alone. The ancient Armenian Church after a while began to establish elementary parochial schools in the provinces. "The Armenian United Educational Society," too, did its share of work in promoting the growth of the elementary schools. During more recent years "The Armenian Benevolent Union" brought her contributions to these energetic activities. But the American missionaries deserve a very high tribute of praise for the unselfish and efficient service they rendered in the field of elementary education. The following statistical[1] figures will give us an idea of the rapid growth of the educational work of the American missionaries in Armenia, especially in the field of elementary education. In 1855 the Armenian protestants and the American missionaries jointly supported 44 schools, with 44 classes, and 1151 pupils. They had also three theological seminaries, with 71 pupils, and one boarding school for girls, with 25 pupils.

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[1] Cf. **Daybreak in Turkey, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 161.**

[2] Cf. History of the Armenian Church, in Armenian, by Kevork Mesrop, p. 515. Translated by the author.

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[1] These statistical data were furnished by Mr. Arshag Alboyajian. He copied and mailed to us from Alexandria, Egypt, all the data which he had at his command. We shall have occasion to refer to them again.

At this time 27 missionaries, 5 pastors, 10 preachers, and 74 assistants were kept in the Armenian field by the protestants.

Thirteen years later, in 1869, the number of schools for boys had increased to 170, with 4,898 pupils. In 1871 the number of schools had increased to 222, with 178 teachers and 6,391 pupils. The number of theological seminaries had increased to 9, with 153 pupils. The number of girls' boarding schools was 10, with 246 pupils. Workers engaged in educational work were distributed as follows: 40 missionaries, 47 native pastors, 56 preachers, and 202 assistants, besides a few others who were engaged in colleges or in other work.[1] These figures differ from those given by the head of the Armenian protestants, Mr. Hagop Mateosian.[2] According to him there were in the protestant schools 5,227 pupils, and in the higher institutions 380 pupils. In the same report it is said that there were 6,730 pupils in the schools established by the missionaries. They had established also an orphanage and a technical school, with 300 native pupils.

Another statistical report, published in 1878, indicates that there were under the care of the American Board, 11,188 pupils, 9,543 of whom were studying in the elementary common schools; 208 male pupils and 380 female pupils were found in the theological and other boarding schools. Mr. A. Alboyajian goes on to say:

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[1] Cf. Avedaper, 1873, No. 19. Quoted by Mr. Alboyajian.
[2] Cf. Ibid 1871, No. 40-41.

"There is not known to us any statistical report published after this date, but it must be said that, if we had such a report, we would have found a development and growth of a bigger proportion. In the year 1905, in the confines of the Central Protestant Union in the provinces of Caesarea, Sebaste, and Marsovan, there existed 76 common schools, with 4,945 pupils, and 71 Sunday Schools with 6,653 pupils. This gives only a comparative idea of the educational conditions prevailing in the other districts. In 1914 there were in Turkey 11 American colleges, and 15 high schools, mostly for boys.

"To give an idea of the amount of attention which the protestants paid to the education in the interior provinces, we here cite the report of the 170 schools existing in 1869. Thus, there existed 81 schools in Tigranocerta, 37 in Aleppo, 20 in Sebaste, 11 in Brusa, 11 in Garin (Erzeroum), 4 in Constantinople, 3 in Smyrna, and 3 in Edirne.

"Besides these, there were schools in Aintab, Bitlis, Harpoot, and Marsovan, schools for girls, and three theological seminaries, one in Harpoot, one in Marash, and one in Marsovan."[1]

Had we been able to secure more extended and comprehensive data in regard to missionary education in Armenia, we should have been better impressed with the unusual zeal and energy expended by the missionaries for the spread of elementary education in all the corners of Armenia.

B. Colleges and Higher Institutions of Learning. In the field of higher education, too, the American missionaries rendered a notable service to the Armenian people. The very limited number of native colleges supported by the Armenian people, were centered mostly in Constantinople, the intellectual center during the nineteenth century for the Armenians living under Ottoman rule. It was a far-seeing plan, on the part of the American missionaries, to spread a network of collegiate institutions in different and widespread sections of the provinces where the Armenians were scattered. We shall give a brief outline of the work of these colleges.

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[1] Cf. Mr. A. Alboyajian.

The objectives of these colleges are to:

"(I) Provide the men and women who are to be the direct evangelizers of their own people.

(II) Train those who shall be the educators and teachers in those countries and the constructors and directors of educational systems.

(III) Train those who shall later become Christian lawyers and physicians.

(IV) Train men who will occupy important places under the local government and so exert an influence in national affairs.

(V) Train men who will become creators of a national literature.

(VI) Train men who shall build up business enterprises in various lines.

(VII) Furnish the entire Christian community with intelligent leaders in every walk of life, insuring wise management and safe organization.

(VIII) Insure self-supporting, self-directing, and self-propagating native Christian institutions of all kinds and in all countries where we are carrying on work."[1]

As to the support of these institutions, Dr. Barton states, "These institutions approach far nearer self-support than do similar schools in the United States. The people themselves pay liberally for the education of their children. The cost of living is low, and the salary paid native teachers, in comparison with wages in this country, is absurdly small. In some cases self-help industrial departments permit many of the pupils to earn their own living while studying.

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[1] Cf. Higher Educational Institutions of the American Board, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 1.

"Each one of the eighteen institutions mentioned here costs the American Board annually upon the average less than $4,000 a year, including all that is paid for the salary and support of American directors and teachers of all grades, the maintenance of the plant, the cost of library and apparatus, and all aid given to students. Two of the eighteen have endowments of their own, so that they draw nothing from the Board. Four or five others have partial endowments which meet a part of their expenses. Others are entirely dependent upon the Board for all aid received. Nine are incorporated, eight under the laws of New York or Massachusetts, and one under the laws of Japan. These have separate Boards of Trustees, while for the rest the Prudential Committee acts as Trustees."[1]

The curriculum of these colleges represents generally the curriculum of the liberal arts colleges of New England. At the time when they were established, the problem of the individual differences was not yet scientifically solved. Therefore the missionary colleges abroad did not offer a variety of elective subjects and specialized training. The subjects of study were more or less prescribed specifically. For instance, the curriculum of the Central Turkey College, in Aintab, Cilicia, was as follows (in 1910): **Freshman**—Ancient Armenian, English, French, History (Ancient, Medieval, Modern), Geometry, Botany, Bible, Physical Education, Music, and Declamation; **Sophomore**—English, French, Political Economy, Zoology, Astronomy, Trigonometry, Physical Education, Music, and Declamation; **Junior**—French, Psychology, Biology, Ethics, Logic, Chemistry, Catechism, Mechanics, Physical Education, Music, and Declamation; **Senior**—French, Geology, Mineralogy, Pedagogy, Evidences of God, Philosophy, Thesis Writing, Physical Education, and Music.

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[1] Cf. Ibid, p. 4. This refers to all the missionary colleges, among which are included the colleges in Armenia.

1. **Central Turkey College.**—This college was chartered by the Legislature of the State of Massachusetts, March 27, 1874, and was formally authorized by the Turkish government on January 15, 1878. "Its general direction and the care of its vested funds, contributed outside of Turkey, are under the control of a Board of Trustees consisting of eight members, appointed in the first case by the Prudential Committee of the American Board. Its local management and the care of that portion of its funds contributed in Turkey are entrusted to a board of eight managers, two of whom are chosen each year by the Cilicia Union (Armenian protestants), and hold office for four years."[1]

The first Freshman class was formed and regular college instruction began September 11, 1876; and the first class, of seven members, was graduated in June, 1880.

From the first a medical department has formed an integral part of the plan of the institution; and for several years a full course of instruction in medicine and surgery was regularly given, and twenty students were graduated with the degree of M. D. This department was later discontinued.

"Up to June, 1903, twenty-four classes have been graduated, making altogether two hundred and twenty-four young men who have completed the full course of study in the college; of these, thirty are preachers or are in preparation for that work, fifty-one are or have been for a considerable time teachers, forty-three are physicians or are pursuing medical studies, thirty are business men, twelve are artisans, three lawyers, and seventeen are dead. Probably three times as many more young men have taken part of the course and for various reasons left before finishing the full curriculum."[1]

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[1] For a more detailed description, Cf. The Higher Educational Institutions of the American Board, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 7.

It must be added that up the World War twelve more classes graduated from the college. Owing to the persecutions and wholesale deportations and massacres of the Armenians perpetrated by the Turkish government, the college was closed in 1914.

In 1928 the college reorganized itself in Aleppo among the Armenian refugees, and formed its first Freshman class.

The number of students in the school in 1903 was one hundred and sixty-two. Eighty were in the college and eighty-two in the preparatory department.

In the establishment of this college, native Armenians of Aintab made financial contributions. The protestants of the city have given over $7,000 towards its building and endowment.

In evaluating the contributions of this college, a well-known physician, Dr. Nakashian, an alumnus, now in New York, writes among other things that Central Turkey College emphasized the teaching of

". . modern science and literature by western methods on a religious and moral basis, without attempting to make converts."[2] Furthermore, C. T. College helped through its graduates "to disperse prejudices; family life, social and national life were placed on a higher and better level. The ideals of personal and national liberty, and the freedom of women were learned, Armenian culture was elevated to higher standards. Special attention was given to the teaching of the art of speech, so much so that many of the graduates were able speakers. The college, standing as a model, aroused the competition of the national schools. Of course, Central Turkey College had some short-comings. It was chiefly in the teaching of languages, and especially in that of the national language and literature."

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[1] Cf. The Higher Educational Institutions of the American Board, p. 9.

[2] This is written in a personal letter to the author by Dr. Nakashian.

Dr. Nakashian also enumerates the names of the nationally known graduates of this great institution of learning, such as: "Professors Ananikian, Manisajian, Daghlian of (New London Girls' College), Bezjian Alexan, Matossian, and Haigazian, the latter the president of Konia College; Rev. Papazian, Rev. Stambolian, and Rev. H. Krikorian, the last named the editor of "Rahnuma," Mr. D. Dikijian, director of the Armenian Educational Foundation of America; and a host of capable physicians, such as the late Dr. S. Kaprielian. Mr. Vahan Kurkjian, one of the eminent graduates of this college, in two articles published in Gotchnag during 1928, portrayed his impressions received during his residence as a student in this college: "The light of science was so attractive to me, and the countenance of Prof. Bezjian was so charming, that I entertained with delight the idea of entering this college as a pupil . . . and I did not regret it."[1]

2. **Harpoot College.**—"The history of Euphrates College shows a gradual but steady growth. First it was a preachers' training class, which developed into a normal school with a department for women to prepare teachers for village schools. This in turn expanded downward as the need was felt for better primary education, and upward until 1878 the collegiate department was organized. The founder and first president was Dr. C. H. Wheeler. The first class was

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[1] Cf. Article of Vahan M. Kurkjian, "Askayin Housher" in Gotchnag, Vol. XXVIII, 1928, p. 848.

graduated from the men's department in 1880, and the first from the women's department three years later. In the twenty-four classes of young men up to 1903 there were one hundred and forty-eight graduates. Many of these have become prominent in various callings. One hundred and twenty-five have served as teachers for a longer or shorter time, twenty-seven are ministers, thirteen physicians, twenty-five in business, four farmers, two surveyors, and one lawyer. From the female department twenty-one classes have been graduated, with ninety-three members, of whom eighty-seven have been and thirty are at present teachers" (in 1903)[1]

The distinctive feature of this college was that it was situated in the very heart of Armenia, which came under the rule of the Turks, and as such it emphasized more than the other American colleges the study of the Armenian language and literature. It was probably for this reason that the graduates of this college have contributed to the literary movements of Armenia in a very creditable way. The eminent poets, Roupen Zartarian; and Roupen Vorperian, now in Paris, and noted writers such as Hratch-yervant, Vahe Haig, Rev. H. G. Benneyan, the veteran editor of Gotchnag, Mr. Arshag Mahdesian, the editor of "The New Armenia," the only English magazine published in the United States dealing with Armenian affairs, and many others are the products of this college. In evaluating the contributions of the Harpoot College, Mr. Vahe Haig writes among other things the following:

"Euphrates College was called Armenia College at first, and under the pressure of the Turkish government changed its name. Euphrates College, from 1880 to 1914, during thirty-four years of its existence, produced graduates, a great majority of whom took up teaching in the Armenian schools in Harpoot as well as in Tigranacerta, Sebaste, Bitlis, Van, and even in Aleppo. A considerable number of the graduates have emigrated to Europe and especially to the United States, and have occupied important positions in business and professional lines.

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[1] Cf. The Higher Educational Institutions of the American Board, by Dr. Barton, pp. 12-14.

"Especially women graduates have contributed to the betterment of the Armenian people in their capacity as teachers and also as intelligent mothers. Some of the most prominent graduates are: Professors N. Tenekejian, K. Nahikian, Garabet Soghikian, author and specialist in Armenian language and literature; Hovhannes Boujikanian, Donabet Lulejian, a Yale graduate, writer, and biologist, and Mugrditch Vorperian, a student of geology. All of these were ruthlessly massacred by the Turkish hordes during the 1914-1915 upheavals. Euphrates College also produced many men of prominence, such as Mr. Garabet Pushman, a well known philanthropist and business man, the founder of the Armenian Educational Foundation, a society to encourage education and good literature, Mr. Arshag Shemavonian, lawyer and diplomat, and Rev. Bedikian (Kisag), noted writer, moralist, and preacher."[1]

3. **Anatolia College.**—On September 8, 1886, this college was organized, situated in Marsovan, Asia Minor. It was chiefly patronized by Armenian students, although others, especially Greeks, were also in attendance. In June, 1903, the graduating class numbered twenty-three. The whole number taking the complete course since the organization of the college in 1886 up to 1903 is one hundred and thirty. This college also was closed in 1915, as a result of the World War and the Turkish anti-Christian atrocities. In evaluating the work of this college, Dr. Hrant S. Kebabjian, a

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[1] This is written in a personal letter to the author, by Mr. Vahe-Haig, former editor of Nor-Or.

prominent Boston physician, an alumnus, writes the following:

"It is a difficult question to answer as to what has been the contribution of the college to the general culture of the Armenians and their development. A small percentage of the Armenian youth has come into contact with occidental, particularly Anglo-Saxon, modes of living and ways of thinking. They have carried their acquisition to their home circles and to their limited environment. Many of the graduates of the school have taught in the elementary schools of northeastern Asia Minor, and must have exercised some influence upon the life of the people. The existence of the College in Marsovan has spurred the local Armenian community to improve its schools and raise their standards. This influence may have been active to a lesser extent in the provinces around. Some of the graduates have gone abroad and attained a considerable degree of success in technical fields.

"But the influence of all these, measured in relation to Armenian culture in general, has not been great, in my opinion. Perhaps the thirty years' existence of the College was not enough to produce a wider impression; perhaps during the next generation the work of the college would have produced a more palpable contribution to Armenian general culture. But the fact remains that no graduate of Anatolia College has become a national figure in literature or politics."[1]

Dr. Kebabjian gives a long list of prominent graduates, among whom are, besides the native professors of the college, the following: Professor Babasinian, at present professor of organic chemistry in Lehigh University; Prof. D. Kabakjian, now professor of physics, University of Pennsylvania; Mr. Armen Tashjian, noted architect in Cleveland; Mr. G. Paelian, electric engineer, Westinghouse Electric Company, New York City; Mr. H. Fermanian, a successful merchant and a noted writer, now in Switzerland; Mr. K. Papazian, graduate of Wisconsin University, an educator, formerly editor of an Armenian daily in Boston; Mr. H. Avakian, assistant editor of an Armenian weekly in New York; and Dr. M. Varzhabedian, a successful physician in Chicago. Dr. Hrant Malejan, a prominent physician in Detroit, and formerly instructor in the University of Michigan.

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[1] This is written in a personal letter to the author by Dr. H. Kebabjian, M. D.

Dr. Kebabjian goes on to say that "From 1886 on to about 1908, the great majority of the students have been Armenians. From 1908 on, the Greeks have increased steadily in number, and the relative number of the students has been about two-fifths Greek, one-fourth to one-third Armenian, and the balance of various nationalities, mostly Russians."

Anatolia College was reorganized in Saloniki, Greece, in 1924. According to the information given in the catalogue[1] of 1926-1927, the total number of its students were 170, during that year, of whom 51 were Armenian students. A great field of service lies before this college in the Balkan peninsula.

4. **Central Turkey Girls' College.**—The school was founded in 1882, at Marash, Cilicia; and soon after was given the name of "college." The college was an educational center for women in Cilicia. During the nineteen years since the first class graduated, eighty-eight have completed the course of study, up to 1903. With two exceptions, all these have taught for a longer or shorter time. The college was closed again in 1914.

In this college, a great number of Armenian young women received the benefits of a liberal arts education.

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[1] Cf. Catalogue 1926-1927.

Among the subjects taught, the Bible has been a regular subject of study throughout the course. Armenian and English were the important languages taught. The studies of the Junior and Senior years were Algebra, Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, Astronomy, Physiology, Psychology, Ethics, General History, Evidences of Christianity, and English Literature.

In the training given to young women, household arts, cooking, dress-making, and designing were emphasized. The boarding students were divided into three groups, each group taking turns in cooking the meals for all the boarding students for a week. This practical training received in the college fitted the young women especially to become very efficient homemakers. As intelligent mothers the majority of the alumni have brightened many homes in Cilicia.

5. **St. Paul's Institute at Tarsus.**—In February, 1887, the charter of this college was granted by the legislature of New York State. In 1888 the school was opened by Mr. MacLachlan and Mr. Jenanyan. There were eight pupils. The new administration began in the fall of 1892. Miss E. H. Brewer, sister of Chief Justice Brewer of the United States Supreme Court, and daughter of one of the earliest missionaries to the Levant, came as teacher in 1899.

During the year 1902-3, there were two hundred and four students in attendance. The Armenian boys numbered one hundred and fifty-two; Greeks, thirty-six; Arabs, twelve; Italian, one; Turks, two; and Kourds, one. In 1893 eight men were graduated; in 1895, two; in 1899, fourteen; in 1900, eleven; in 1901, ten; in 1902, six; in 1903, six—fifty-seven in all. A greater number of graduates went out of this college in the succeeding years till 1914, when the college was discontinued. The last president was Dr. Thomas D. Christie. In evaluating the work of this college, a prominent graduate and one time professor of the Armenian language there, Mr. K. A. Kalousdian, writes:

> "Tarsus College, up to 1913-1914, produced 158 graduates; and between 1893 and 1915 the college trained about 3,000 young men, having approximately 150 students each year. In 1913-1914, the preparatory department had 122 students and the college 88; total 210 students. Out of the 122 graduates leaving the college in the years of 1893-1910, 30 per cent have pursued business lines, 28 per cent preaching, 24 per cent teaching, and 18 per cent medical work.
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> "Tarsus College, especially since 1900, has endeavored to emphasize studies of Armenian culture. During the period of the French occupation of Cilicia, the major part of the leading personalities of the Armenian circles consisted of the alumni of Tarsus College.
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> "Tarsus College has produced, besides the native professors, a few eminent Armenians, such as: Der Sahag Der Bedrosian, an active Armenian priest; Dr. Hagop Zeitountzian, the orator; Professor Haroutiun Dadourian, professor of mathematics in Trinity College, Connecticut; Dr. Arsen Lucian, in the University of Pennsylvania; and Mr. Toros Esayan, lawyer in Detroit.
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> "Tarsus College has empasized languages, commercial subjects, and Armenian language, music and literature. During its first period, Tarsus College lacked necessary scientific instruments, laboratories, and adequate buildings."[1]

6. **Other American Colleges.**—Besides these colleges a great number of Armenian students were educated in **The International College**, at Smyrna, recognized as a college on April 8, 1903, by a charter granted by the commonwealth of Massachusetts; in the **Amer-**

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[1] This is written in a personal letter to the author by Mr. K. A. Kalousdian, of New York.

ican College for Girls at Constantinople; and in the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut. This institution became especially the alma mater for a great number of Armenian physicians. "Robert College" of Constantinople, as an independent American institution of higher learning, attracted many ambitious Armenian young men. Although this center of American ideals and learning was located at Constantinople and was not primarily a college for Armenian youth, its character and scope being international, nevertheless it produced a number of highly trained Armenian graduates. Among them one finds literary men like: Levon Larentz, Enovk Armen, Hrant Asadour, Hovhannes Alexanian, Levon Mugrditchian, Ervant Messiayan, and Hagop Andonian; educators like Professor Hagopos Jejizian, Apraham Hagopian, and Minas Szalian; a very successful business man and a most gracious philanthropist, Mr. Mihran Karagheusian of New York; and preachers like Rev. Antranik Bedikian, and others.

Besides these there existed in Asia Minor an independent semi-American and semi-Armenian college at Konia, under the presidency of Dr. Haigazian; an American Teachers' College at Sivas; and an institution of higher learning at Van, which was on the road to organize itself as a budding college in 1914 under the care and efforts of Dr. Reynolds, long an American missionary to Armenia, but all his efforts were frustrated by Turkish atrocities[1].

Indeed, the educational activities of the American missionaries, as well as those of the independent American individuals, were promising a more rapid growth and much fruitful usefulness to the Armenian race! Unfortunately most of these efforts at civilization were cut short by the wholesale extermination or exile of the Armenian people in 1914.

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[1] Cf. Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, by Henry Morgenthau, New York, 1918, for the authentic record of the Turkish atrocities, and Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, (1915-1916), Documents presented by Viscount Grey of Fallodon to Viscount Bryce, London, 1916.

V. The Distinctive Features of the American Missionary Contributions to Armenian Education.—In summarizing the special educational contributions of the American missionary efforts in Armenia, the following facts stand out:

1. They introduced among the Armenians, education for women on a larger scale and in a broader and more practical kind of training than hitherto existed. Before the coming of the American missionaries to Armenia, women did not enjoy facilities and opportunities for a systematic education. The American missionaries, actuated by the Christian desire to see the women work for their individual salvation through their own efforts, opened elementary schools for girls in various centers of Armenia. And in order to prepare women leaders, they opened also institutions of higher learning for them. Every American college for Armenian boys had also its separate girls' department of more or less collegiate standing. The Anatolia and Harpoot Colleges also had a girls' department. The Aintab Seminary for girls was of Junior College standing. The Marash College for girls was a regular liberal arts college. The methodic training that the Armenian girls received in these institutions was one of the causes of an awakening in the consciousness of freedom, dignity and equal rights, an ideal entertained by

the Armenian women during recent years. Of course, native girls' institutions had their part in this awakening, but the American missionary movement played the part of the pioneer and leader in the education of women.

2. American missionaries popularized and encouraged the movement of public elementary education for the children of the common people. This was a distinctively American contribution.

3. The American missionary schools enriched the curriculum of Armenian schools by introducing a wider range of school subjects. Especially was this true in the introduction of the sciences, and in practical and experimental subjects. Before the coming of the American missionaries the Armenian schools were satisfied with the teaching of languages, history, and literature. At the most, they emphasized the teaching of the "seven liberal arts," with the old-fashioned division of subjects.

4. American missionaries also introduced more scientific methods of teaching. Instead of emphasizing a mere memoriter type of learning, they laid great emphasis on thinking and selective judgment. For instance, the pupils trained under the influence of Professor Alexan Bezjian, the veteran physicist of Aintab College, could not help learning how to think, so thought-provoking were his questions, so original was his method of approach!

5. American missionaries also showed the dignity of labor, and emphasized the teaching of the manual arts. Formerly the Armenian educated class scorned everything that had anything to do with the

practical or ordinary affairs of life. The purely academic activities were considered to be the distinctive mark of an educated person's culture. The American missionaries proved by their example that a truly educated person is one who is able to combine theory and practice, and thinking and doing. The following quotation relating to Dr. Hamlin, the founder of Robert College in Constantinople, aptly illustrates this point:

> "Dr. Hamlin increased the number of electrical and physical instruments in his school without ceasing. He used to repair most skillfully oars of row-boats. He personally repaired the building of Bebek, where the seminary was established, and where Robert College had its beginning. He taught his pupils to construct stove pipes, stoves, tin or iron shovels, ash-pans, etc. He built mouse-traps, and with the proceeds of the sale of them saved a family from destruction. . . . He also had a bakery, and Mr. Hamlin's bakery was the occasion of a humorous incident during the Crimean War. The surgeon of the British hospital of Scutari-Selemieh, hearing about his particular brand of bread, invited Mr. Hamlin to his place. When M. Hamlin went, the surgeon looked at him, and without greeting him, said, 'Are you the baker, Hamlin?'
>
> " 'No, sir, I am Rev. Mr. Hamlin, an American missionary.' The surgeon answered, 'I wanted to see a baker, and here I found a missionary; thank God, I am not a heathen to ask for a missionary.' "[1]
>
> Mr. Hamlin was given the commission to supply the hospital with bread.

6. In fine, it was through the influence of the American mission that high ideals of American civilization and the Anglo-Saxon ideals of fairness were introduced to the Armenians.

7. They exalted physical activities in their schools

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[1] The Rise and Development of Evangelism in Armenia, in Armenian, by H. Stepan Utujian, p. 185. Translated by the author.

as constituting a dignified interest in the life of the pupils. Mr. Shavarsh Krissian, a graduate of Robert College, endeavored to create a favorable interest among the Armenians towards sports and athletic games by publishing an Armenian magazine devoted to this purpose.

8. The American missionaries were contributors to the growth of vernacular literature. The Bible was translated into the modern vernacular by Dr. E. Riggs.

9. They also published a series of modern textbooks, vernacular Armenian readers, patterned after the model of similar American textbooks.

That the Armenian nation appreciates the invaluable work of the missionaries in the field of education, is voiced by a great number of Armenian leaders. Mr. Leon Mugrditchian, a veteran Armenian publicist and business man of Egypt, who refers especially to the merits of Robert College, and whose remarks can be applied to all American educational institutions in Armenia, in the following statement expresses the common sentiment of the educated and cultured Armenians throughout the world:

> "The older I grow and the closer I approach death, the more I appreciate that profound influence which was exercised in my character by the college education I received.
>
> "Outside of college, in practical life, I had occasions to study the training given in other foreign schools; and I have come to the definite conclusion that of them all the American education is the best to build one's character and to prepare one for the struggle of existence. It combines the theoretical and practical elements.
>
> "O my fellow students of Robert College, of the present day, I entreat you to appreciate that excellent and great institution, which prepares not only men of character, but also men

of true patriotism, for those races who have the wisdom of educating their coming generation.

"The Armenian nation owes a great deal to the United States; above all she owes much to Robert College."[1]

VI. Armenian Student Migration to the United States.—Prior to the arrival of the American missionaries among the Armenians, the Armenian[2] students usually went to either Italy or France; and those Armenians who lived under the rule of Russia sent their students to Switzerland and Germany to carry on their advanced studies. With the coming of the American missionaries, a select group of ambitious young Armenians turned their eyes to the United States. The first[3] Armenian student, who, through the influence of the American missionaries, came to the United States, was Khachadour Osganian, who landed in New York in 1834. Others followed. Among these were Senekerim Der Minasian, who studied medicine in the United States (1844) and practiced it in Constantinople; Haroutiun Vehabedian, who studied in New York and later occupied the seat of the Armenian patriarchate at Jerusalem. It is not our intention to cite here the names of all the Armenian students who attended American universities and rendered a valuable service to the Armenians in their homeland. Suffice it to say that a few generations of Armenian students of American training introduced among the Armenians American culture and high conceptions of social and moral virtues, as well as practical arts, surgery, dentistry, and engineering. In 1914, the Armenian[1] Students Association of America, organized in 1910, counted a membership of 271 students, who were attending some of the best American institutions of learning. It is safe to assume that, besides these, there were at that time probably as a great a number of other Armenian students who were not affiliated with this organization.

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[1] Cf. The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Armenian Students of Robert College, in Armenian, pp. 96-97. Translated by the author.

[2] Cf. Chapter XIII, Part III.

[3] A detailed list of Armenian students coming to the United States is found in the 1912 Yearbook of M. Seropian.

Some of these Armenian students were planning to return to their homeland to work as educational and cultural missionaries among their compatriots. Most of them settled in the United States and rendered their service in their particular field of endeavor.

In 1924, Gotchnag[2] published the work and careers of some 315 Armenian professional men and women in the United States. This list was exceedingly incomplete. However, it brought out before the public the extent of the influence of American education among the Armenians. This number could safely be doubled to represent the actual number of university trained Armenian professionals. This splendid result is the product of the American cultural seeds sown by American missionaries or private individuals, in a receptive soil. The culture of the United States grafted on the old culture of Armenia was promising good fruits, but these were nipped in the bud by the destructive forces of Asiatic despotism.

Another interesting fact regarding the Armenians in the United States is found in the fact that they count fewer illiterates[1] among them than most other foreigners.

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[1] Cf. The Report of the Armenian Students Association of America, 1914.

[2] Cf. Gotchnag, Armenian weekly of New York, Vol. XXIV January 12, 1924, and numbers 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 38, 39, 42, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52.

> "There are fewer illiterates among the Armenians than among any of the other so-called newer immigrant races from Southern Europe. This remarkable fact—I call it remarkable because the Armenians have had no government of their own for five hundred years and any attempt they have made for advancement has been suppressed by the Sultans—is disclosed by the statement of statistics of the United States Government. Of all the Armenians, men, women, and children, admitted into this country between 1899-1910, only 23.9 per cent could not read or write. The percentage of illiterates of other races of immigrants for the same periods is as follows: Bulgarian, 41.7; Greeks, 26.4; Hebrews, 26.0; Roumanians, 35.0; Southern Italians, 53.9; Polish, 35.4; Portuguese, 68.2; Russians, 38.4; and Syrians, 53.3."[2]

This statistical account demonstrates the fact that the Armenians received the benefits of a public education, even though this had to be maintained by self-taxation and individual initiative, without the assistance of an organized government, and even against the persecutions of such a government. In this achievement, great credit must be given to the work of the missionaries, who endeavored to spread the benefits of an elementary education to the children of the common people. We shall see in our next chapter how the native Armenian educational agencies, urged on by the example of the American missionaries, were inspired to make their contribution to the field of education.

The Armenians in America prove their love for education by the fact that they gladly organized educational societies to render financial and moral aid to their compatriots for the maintenance of schools. For almost every town in Armenia one such society has been organized. For instance, the natives of Harpoot, those of Malatia, Van, Arabkir, Sebaste, and Aintab have organized separate educational societies; and each year they raise funds for the furtherance of educational projects among their people.

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[1] Cf. The Armenians in America, by Mr. V. Malcom, p. 104.

[2] Report of the Immigration Commission, Abstract of Reports, Vol. I, p. 99. Quoted by V. Malcom.

Besides these educational societies, there is **The Armenian Educational Foundation,** founded in 1906 by Mr. G. T. Pushman of Chicago, and having for its purpose the encouragement of "helpful leadership by granting loans, without interest, to worthy students of Armenian descent, who are in financial need, to facilitate their pursuing of technical and professional education."[1] The original endowment was $25,000. This sum has been increased to $200,000. Up to 1927 over 250 Armenian students were benefited by this Foundation.

The American educational program carried out among the Armenians in their native land bore much fruit and Armenians in the United States have not been slow to recognize the fact. There are several college and university professors of Armenian origin, among whom are well-known: Professors Babasinian in Lehigh, Kabakjian in the University of Pennsylvania, Dadourian in Trinity College at Hartford, etc. There are a large number of prominent physicians. Dr. Minas Gregory of Bellevue Hospital of New York is nationally known as a psychiatrist. There are engineers, artists, etc. Mr. Haig Patigian, of San Francisco, a sculptor of wide reputation, represents the best of this group of Armenian intellectuals, trained at the hands of American educators both in American colleges in Armenia and in the United States.

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[1] Cf. Official report of the Armenian Educational Foundation of America, 1927.

CHAPTER XIV

Educational Conditions Among the Armenians in Turkey

As has already been mentioned[1] Armenia, having lost her political independence by the fall of the Cilician kingdom, in 1393, fell a victim to the constantly changing vicissitudes of fate. During the first part of the nineteenth century, Armenia was divided chiefly between Persia and Turkey; but soon, by a series of periodic wars, Russia snatched away from Persia and Turkey valuable sections of the Armenian fatherland. Thus, after the first quarter of a century, we find Armenia ruled chiefly by Turkey and Russia, Persia gradually ceding her dominion over Armenia to her powerful neighbor, Russia.

In tracing the history of education of Armenia we must therefore first consider the educational development among the Armenians ruled by the Turks, then phases of Armenian education as developed among the Armenians in Russia, who were more fortunate than their brethren under Turkish rule.

I. Constantinople as a Center of Literary, Political and Commercial Importance.—The Turks captured Constantinople in 1453. They had previously conquered the major part of Armenia and Asia Minor. The first rulers of Turkey showed more sagacity in governing their subject races than the despotic tyrants of the decadence period, such as Sultan Abdul Hamid and his political advisers and co-workers. Thus, Sultan Mahmoud Fatih II, observing the constructive abilities of the Armenians, invited them to settle in Constantinople, to build industries, develop commerce, and serve in various posts of importance at his court.

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[1] Cf. Chapter I.

In 1641 he set a seat for an Armenian patriarchate which was to have political jurisdiction over the Armenians in Turkey and act as a responsible representative of his people before the Sultan. Patriarch Hovagim was the first to occupy this seat. Sultan Mahmoud gave to the Armenians certain privileges such as freedom of worship, internal jurisdiction over and maintenance of Armenian schools, churches and monasteries, and the right of preserving their own native tongue and literature. In this way the Armenians, at least in Constantinople and its vicinity, enjoyed a comparatively comfortable existence. In their turn, a host of Armenian leaders rendered valuable service to the Sultans. Generations of Duzians were entrusted with the mint of the Turkish empire, while the Dadians were charged with the arsenals; the Balians were chief architects at the court; and the Yeremians had charge of the banking affairs of Egypt. In short, the Armenian settlement at Constantinople grew in numbers and prospered considerably, so that, in 1914, there lived in Constantinople about 250,000 Armenians. Only a small number remain.[1]

It is natural, therefore, to expect that Constantinople would gradually become, for the Armenians in Turkey, a center of literature, politics, commerce, and education, in which matters the Armenians of Constantinople in due time assumed the rôle of leadership. We have seen that Apkar Tbir[2] introduced printing among the Armenians in Constantinople, in 1565, and that Armenian books were published there. In 1833 appeared the first Armenian newspaper in Constantinople, and in 1855 there were already eight Armenian newspapers. "Between the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century, no other Armenian center was able to compete with Constantinople, especially in the publication of periodicals," according to Leo.

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[1] 53,000, according to the latest census.

[2] Cf. Chapter X.

II. Deplorable Coinditions and Need for Reform. But things were not so propitious as they seemed to be. The Turkish government was a theocracy and the Armenian Patriarchs were chosen not by reason of their fitness for office, but because of their ability and willingness to pay for it. It is not difficult to imagine the deplorable effect of this system upon the internal affairs of Armenia. To make matters worse, the patriarch alone was not the chief director of Armenian affairs; at the court of the Sultan there were a number of Armenian officials who exercised an almost despotic rule over the patriarch himself. Although a few of these men were good and disinterested, most were selfish, ambitious, and meddlesome. "Although officially the authority of the Armenian Patriarchs of Constantinople was absolute, they were in their turn subjected to the rule of the Armenian chiefs, called "Amiras," who represented simply a nobility of money and further than that, had no other proof or reason to be called chiefs."[1] It is obvious, therefore, that under the non-representative rule of the patriarchs and "Amiras" the Armenian internal affairs could not be regulated, especially after the coming of the American and Jesuit missionaries and the introduction of modern ideas by the Armenian students returning from Italy, France, and the United States.

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[1] Cf. The History of the Armenian Church, by Archbishop Malakia Ormanian, p. 120.

III. Armenian Students and Their Contribution.

During the nineteenth century the Armenians turned their eyes to the west, and a great number of Armenian young men migrated to European centers of learning to receive a higher education.

The first group of the Armenian students went to Italy, where the Armenian Mechitarist monastery at Venice proved to be a mighty influence. The educated and Europeanized Armenians of the first part of the nineteenth century were chiefly products of Italian education. Mr. A. Alboyajian[1] enumerates a few names of men who were chiefly educated in Italy, among whom were those of Dr. Boghos Shashian (1724-1815), Dr. Joachim Oghoulloukian, Gosmos Kemurjian, and Marchise Giovanni de Serpos.

But a second group of Armenian[2] students went to France in 1848, and upon returning brought with them ideas of freedom, reform, and enlightenment. The members of the first Armenian Educational Council were young men of such European training. Among them were "Hagop Amasian, agriculturist; Apraham

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[1] Mr. Alboyajian furnished us with a number of documents dealing with the educational development of the Armenians in Constantinople.

[2] A long list of the names of these students is published in Masis, Review of Primary and Secondary Education, May 1, 1894. Sinabian Krikor (1843), Rousinian Nahabet (1849), Mozian Krikor (1853), Khorasanjian Michael (1859), and others studied in the University of Paris. Till 1893, fifty-two Armenian students graduated from the medical department of Paris. There were also students in other departments and in Montpellier, Nancy, and other places.

Yeramian, linguist; Garabet Eutujian, journalist; Haroutiun Hovouyan, philologist; Sarim Maksoudian, biologist; Nigoghayos Balian, architect; Khachadour Bardizbanian, mathematician; Nahapet Rousinian, linguist; Hovhanness Vahanian, chemist; Serope Vichenian, physician; Arakel Dadian, manufacturer; Haroutiun Dadian, physicist; Simon Dadian, business man; and Krikor Odian, writer."[1]

Toward the latter part of the ninteenth century, the Armenian students also turned their eyes to the United States of America. Their contributions have already been discussed.[2]

With the return of these students, a struggle started between the old ideas and the new. The champions of the new ideas called themselves "illuminati," over against the conservatives, who were known as "non-illuminati." The young men wished to see the affairs of the nation in the hands of a representative chosen body, free from the encroachments of the arbitrary rulers, such as the patriarchs and "Amiras." With the champions of the new ideas were aligned the interests of the rising class of Armenian bourgeoisie and artisans. The struggle gradually gained momentum and intensity. After twenty years of struggle, it was agreed upon to codify an Armenian internal constitution. This was accomplished in 1860 and officially affirmed by the sultan three years later.

IV. Education in the Armenian Constitution.—In the preamble of this constitution, Article[3] III, we read:

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[1] Cf. Azkabadoum, Archbishop Malakia Ormanian, Vol. III, p. 3886. Translated by the author.

[2] Chapter XII, Part V.

[3] Cf. The Armenian Constitution, (in Armenian). Translation by the author.

"It is the duty of the nation to care for the moral, intellectual, and financial needs of the nationals, to preserve the doctrines of the Armenian Church unsullied, to spread equally among boys and girls of all ages of maturity the knowledge of things which are necessary for mankind, to keep the institutions of the nation prosperous, to increase the incomes in a lawful manner, and to manage the finances wisely.

The internal constitution provides that there shall be established a central Educational[1] Council:

"The Educational Council consists of seven lay members.[2]

"The function of the Educational Council is to exercise general direction over the education and training of the Armenian people. Its duties are: to see to it that good order prevails in the national schools, to encourage and render assistance to such societies as plan to care for the education of the Armenian girls and boys, and to try to improve the conditions of the teachers and insure their future;—to endeavor to prepare well-educated and learned teachers for the nation and also to prepare textbooks for such schools.

"The Educational Council shall give diplomas to students who complete the courses of studies of the national schools; shall determine the selection of the textbooks, and shall carry on the annual examinations.

"In the matter of religious training, the Educational Council shall be subordinate to the Religious Council, because the latter shall select religious textbooks and teachers of religion shall conduct examinations in these subjects and give diplomas."

There is no doubt that this Educational Council contributed to the direction of affairs in educational matters; but its jurisdiction did not go very far and its authority had no teeth; furthermore, it had no funds at its disposal. In 1887, H. S. Osgan, a member of this Educational Council, voices his complaint against this condition of affairs. "The two arms of the Educational Council, if there is to be action, are authority and money. The Council has very little of the first and none at all of the second."[1] Mr. Alboyajian summarizes the contributions of the codification of the Armenian internal constitution in this way: "The constitution[2] did not introduce any novelty. But it affirmed and consecrated the conditions which were developed during a period of sixty years, and gave permanence to the prevailing conditions. . . . . The constitution served as a stimulus for the rapid development of the educational work and the increase of the schools" after 1860. It must not be forgotten, however, that it was a strictly voluntary choice for the Armenians to govern themselves internally by this constitution. This agreement and consent was based upon moral and spiritual aspirations of the race rather than upon any external force. Hence, the Educational Council in this organization had only moral power and served as a guide rather than as a ruling body. It is difficult to understand how the Armenian schools for public elementary and higher education began consistently and gradually to develop under this system, without any support of the ruling political authorities of the country and without any assistance from the outside. A subject people, self-taxed, supported a system of schools which reduced the rate of illiteracy to a minimum, at least in Constantinople. "Even long after the beginning of the nineteenth century only one-tenth of the Armenian men in Constantinople were literate; women did not know how to read at all. At the present time (1887) it is very difficult to find a ten-year-old Armenian boy or girl who does not know how to read in some small degree at least. This is, in fact a remarkable figure, showing the reduction of illiteracy among a mass of people consisting of 150,000 individuals, and achieved in a period of fifty years."[1] This educational achievement was accomplished by a subject race, guided by its internal constitution only, one which did not rely for its enforcement upon a police force or any coercion whatsoever.

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[1] Cf. The Armenian Constitution, (in Armenian). Translated by the author.

[2] Article 45.

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[1] Cf. The Educational Conditions Among Us, (Grtagan Vijag Mer), p. 25, by H. Osgan, 1887. Translated by the author.

[2] In documents and sources furnished by Alboyajian to the author. Translated by the author.

V. Educational Conditions and Development Before and After the Adoption of the Constitution.—Even up to the last quarter of the eighteenth century the Armenians as well as the Greeks of Constantinople were not permitted to have public elementary[1] schools. This condition was changed in 1789, by Sultan Selim III of Turkey.[2]

The first elementary parochial school was established in 1790 at Langa, in Fuchuji street, by the initiative of Mirijanian Mugrditch "Amira." This school was to be supported by the church and by the tuition paid by those students who were able to pay, and by his own donations.

Between 1790 and 1800 other schools were established at Balat, Orta Keugh, Kourou-Cheshme, Samatia, and Scudari.

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[1] Cf. Educational Conditions Among Us, in Armenian, by H. Osgan, p. 33, published 1887. Translated by the author.

[1] Cf. An Educational Fiftieth Anniversary, (Grtagan Hisnamyag Me), a series of articles published in Puzantion, formerly a prominent journal in Constantinople. Gives a detailed history of the rise and development of Armenian parochial schools in Constantinople. Furnished to us by Mr. A. Alboyajian.

[2] Masis, 1859.

In 1820 Bezjian "Amira," turning his attention to the training of girls, established the first industrial school for girls, at Koum-Kapou.

In 1821 the sister of Janik "Amira" established a school for girls at Samatia.

In 1826 the Bezjian school of embroidery for girls was established.

In 1828 Bezjian, with the co-operation of the patriarchate, reopened the Mother school (Mair Varjaran) and appointed Krikor Pashtimaljian as teacher. He was the educational leader whose pupils led the movement of protestant religious and educational programs. It was here that plays were presented for the first time.

Priest Der Mesrop, the teacher of the Armenian language in this school, in his grammar published in 1808, mentions that at this time free education was offered everywhere in Constantinople. In 1823-1831, during the time of Patriarch Garabet of Balat, the educational movement received great encouragement. At this period it was revealed that the income of the churches was not sufficient to support the schools. Therefore the patriarch sent a circular letter, June 5, 1824, in which he gave certain suggestions and instructions to teachers as well as to students. He ordered "to have schools established for the training of the children of the church." In this way, for the first time, the authority of the patriarch in educational matters was asserted and accepted. Upon the suggestion of the patriarch, the various guilds took charge of furnishing necessary funds for the support of the schools. This was indeed a new thing. Prior to this, as well as later, the schools were under the financial and moral patronage of the "Amiras."

At the time of the arrival of the American missionaries at Constantinople, the Armenians had already a number of free public schools, supported by the church. "At about the time mission work began in Turkey, the system of schools organized by Joseph Lancaster of England was attracting much attention. . . . Lancasterian schools were having a period of great popularity in Greece. They spread to Constantinople and were at once adopted by Greeks, Armenians, and Turks. These were effective in arousing the popular mind, and awakening a desire for an education. These schools were for the most part religious, but not sectarian. They were not long continued by either the Turks or the Greeks, but the seed of learning fell into especially fruitful soil among the Armenians."[1]

A network of parochial school was already established among the Armenians in Constantinople at the time of the adoption of the Armenian constitution. These schools gradually received better supervision and unification, through the influence of the Educational Council.

Secular Subjects were introduced in these schools as early as the first quarter of the nineteenth century. This movement for secularization was accelerated after the sixties, after the adoption of the internal constitution and with the increase of the Armenian young men who had received their education in Europe, especially in France. Undoubtedly, the introduction of textbooks prepared by the American missionaries had a great share in bringing about this result.

In 1864 Mr. Antranik Bey Gurjikian opened a Sunday[1] school to teach physical sciences. This is an indication of how rapidly the secularization movement was gaining momentum.

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[1] Cf. Daybreak In Turkey, by Dr. J. Barton, p. 160.

Mr. Alboyajian considers especially valuable the publication of a reader for children (Varjoutiun Mangantz). This was done in 1824 by Father Minas Vartabet Pujishgian of the Mechitarist order. It enjoyed great popularity in the years 1840-1860 in the schools of Constantinople.

Even at this time there were still some schools where the old textbooks such as the **Psalms** and **Narek** were in vogue.

As late as 1880 the old system of discipline in which corporal punishment had a prominent place, was still in vogue. The "Falakhan," a characteristic punishment of children, in which the soles of the bare feet of children were struck with an especially prepared wooden rod, was banished in 1880.

In 1850, in addition to the study of French, English was introduced in the school at Samatia through the efforts of Mekhilji Antranik, a jeweler, who had learned to appreciate the advantages of the English language. After the Crimean war, and especially after 1856, British commerce in Turkey began to take on larger proportions; the study of the English language thereby received an added impetus. The presence of the American missionaries and their extensive educational activities also had a share in this matter.

Among the educational institutions founded in Constantinople, the **Kalfayan orphanage** for girls occupies a prominent place. It was founded 67 years ago by Sirpouhi Mayrabed, an Armenian lady of noble aspirations. The aim of the institution has been to offer a free education to orphan girls. It still continues to serve this purpose today.

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[1] The Sunday School started as a secular school in England.

VI. **The Struggle for the Armenian Vernacular.** We saw that the Mechitarist fathers as well as the American missionaries encouraged the development of the Armenian language, by publishing textbooks in the vernacular. The American missionaries were responsible for translations into the vernacular, such as that of the Bible, by Dr. Elias Riggs. The introduction of modern Armenian into the schools was a different question, however. It did not gain a firm foothold in the curriculum of the Armenian schools without a serious struggle between the conservatives and the modernists. Beginning with 1880, the records of this struggle can be found, in the "Arziv Vasbouragan," published by Khrimian, and also in the publications of the Mechitarist fathers, in "Noyian Aghavni," "Massyatz Aghavni," and others. In 1851 the work published by Krikor Odian, made a stir. In 1853, Rousinian, with the co-operation of two other writers, published his book (Oughakhosoutiun), "Correct Speaking," a sort of grammar of modern Armenian. He was a member of the first Armenian Educational Council. It aroused embittered shouts of protest from the conservatives, who still clung to the idea that the old classical Armenian was capable of meeting the needs of the Armenian nation. As a result of this opposition, on January 25, 1855, this book was officially banned by the patriachate[1], and its use forbidden. But this was merely a temporary victory for the conservatives. They were unable to stem the tide of modernism and reform, and in due time even the staunchest champions of the classical Armenian, such as Zabelle Asadour, R. Berberian, and others were compelled to use modern Armenian.

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[1] Cf. Azkabadoum, Vol. III, by Archbishop Malakia Ormanian, p. 3886.

VII. **Adult Education in Constantinople.**—The Armenians in Constantinople encouraged not only education among the children, but here and there made attempts to encourage adult education. The leaders of this movement were Krisdosdour Ghazarosian and Haroutiun Markarian. According to Mr. Alboyajian, they organized a society "to offer free education to adults." It was in the school at Galata that K. Ghazarosian gave the last thirty years of his life to adult education, lecturing regularly on Sundays to the poor and uneducated Armenians living in Constantinople.

Mr. Antranig Gurdjikian, as it was mentioned before, opened a Sunday school to teach physical sciences, in 1864.

VIII. **The Educational Movement in the Interior Provinces.**—Education as a factor of national regeneration was quickly recognized by the new leaders of the Armenian people, especially by those who received their education in Europe and had had occasions to observe the marvelous effect produced by it in the regeneration of Prussia. The lessons learned by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 were not forgotten by the Armenian leaders. Also, after the Russo-Turkish War, the peace conference of San-Stefano, in 1879, promised the Armenians reforms in the interior provinces of Turkey, where conditions had become unbearable. Robbery and rape were prevalent there and the Armenian peasants were constantly and openly persecuted by the provincial rulers. Article 16 of the San-Stefano peace treaty was changed to Article 61 of the Berlin peace pact. Although the conditions of reform previously laid down were rendered more vague by it the Armenians very naively and enthusiastically pinned their hopes on it. A new ray of hope[1] had dawned upon the political horizon of the Armenian nation. In this way the "Armenian question"[2] took its beginning. The particular significance of this lies in the fact that, encouraged by the hope of a regenerated fatherland, the Armenians from now on carried on their educational program more intensely and zealously than ever. Even the occasional massacres by the Turkish government could not dampen their enthusiasm in this respect.

A number of provincial towns in Armenia had monasteries. These institutions served as educational centers not only for monks, but also for Armenian children. These monasteries are too numerous to mention, but it should be borne in mind that a great number of them endeavored to meet the educational needs of the nation.

Also, the Armenian churches in the provinces financed, through their income, parochial schools which offered a quasi-public free elementary education for the children of the poor. In each town and hamlet in the last quarter of the nineteenth century one such school could be found.

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[1] Armenians began to aspire at political reforms in Turkish Armenia. Armenian Question is the diplomatic designation given to political aspirations of the Armenian race.

[2] Cf. La Question Armenienne, a la lumiere des Documents, by Marcel Leart.

We have already noted the fact that the American missionaries established, with the co-operation of the native protestant churches, elementary schools for the common people.[1]

The Educational Societies, the history and contributions of which will be discussed in the next chapter, also had their share in the spread of elementary education among the masses.

Local private schools also met the needs of elementary and secondary education of the children of the more well-to-do people.

From 1900-1910 the author was personally acquainted with both types of such schools in the city of Aintab, Cilicia, where the Armenian church maintained two free schools, one for the elementary and one for the secondary grades. This school for boys was called "Nersesian," that for girls, "Hayganoushian." Yearly about 500 Armenian young people were educated in these schools maintained by the church. Besides these, there was in Aintab an excellent private school, Vartanian, combining both elementary and secondary grades. The graduates of this institution have occupied positions of leadership among the Armenians of Cilicia, as well as in the more general affairs of the nation. Its first principal and founder, Mr. Vahan Kurkjian, gave a soul to this institution. Bishop Papken Gulesserian received his first training in this school. Shahe Vartabet Kasbarian was also an alumnus of Vartanian. A. N. Nazar, the veteran editor of Baikar and prominent journalist of Boston was an alumnus and later a teacher of this school. During 1910 the alumni of this school organized a central institution of higher learning, called Cilicia Institute, with three departments: a teachers' college, a business college, and a theological seminary. The teachers of this school were graduates of Harvard, Columbia, Yale, and other American universities. Unfortunately this budding and promising institution of learning was discontinued because of the Turkish atrocities of 1914-1915, and the teachers were either killed by Turks or died in exile. One of these martyrs to education was Mr. A. Chamichian, a graduate of Vartanian and of Harvard University, who was the principal of this institution. This institution has been mentioned here to furnish an example of similar educational enterprises that the Armenians had undertaken in Van, Sebaste, Harpoot, Malatia, and elsewhere. In Aintab there were a number of institutions of similar character such as "Atenagan," a private elementary and secondary school; "Haigazian," and Hripsimiantz, the latter a private school for girls. Besides these, the protestant Armenians had their elementary schools and the American missionary college had its preparatory department.

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[1] Cf. Chapter XXII.

This represents the educational picture of an interior city. The situations in the other cities resemble it more or less.

Among the institutions of learning conducted and supported by private individuals and organizations, Tilgadentzi School at Harpoot should be mentioned especially. The founder and principal of this primary and secondary school was Mr. H. Haroutunian, better known by his pen name, Mr. Tilgadentzi. Through his school he contributed much to Armenian education, and the products of his school have taken a leading part in Armenian national affairs.

The school of Mr. H. Yeremian of Van was another private school of high standing. Its founder and principal, Mr. Yeremian, who is now in Egypt, is a man of outstanding personality. In spite of his physical defects—he is blind in both eyes—he has inspired generations of students.

The **Senekerimian School** of Sebaste, supported by the society of the same name, and the school of "Sourp Garabet" of Caesarea deserve especial mention for their fine contributions to Armenian education.

In 1903 the Armenian patriarchate issued a detailed report, depicting the educational conditions during the period from 1901 to 1902.

The following statistical table will show the extent of the educational work in 1901-1902, carried on in the Armenian interior provinces and elsewhere, by churches and private societies:

No.	Provinces	Schools Parochial Semi-public	Boy Pupils	Girl Pupils	Men Teachers	Women Teachers	Monthly Income and Expense
1	Adrianopolis	6	314	251	12	10	6,130
2	Rodosto	9	1,017	856	27	21	11,885
3	Nicomidea	38	5,404	3,103	134	78	32,776
4	Bilejig	10	1,120	143	18	3	3,137
5	Goudina	5	825	349	16	7	6,141
6	Smyrna	27	1,640	1,295	55	54	35,766
7	Galatia	7	895	395	20	9	5,508
8	Sighert	3	163	84	9	2	833
9	Caesarea	42	3,795	1,140	107	18	20,450
10	Amasia-Marsovan	9	1,524	814	39	15	10,395
11	Shabin-Karahisar	27	2,040	105	38	4	4,699
12	Janig	27	1,361	344	44	15	8,274
13	Trebizond	47	2,184	718	72	13	17,464
14	Garin	27	1,956	1,178	44	41	9,495
15	Keghi	27	1,336	367	35	8	2,035
16	Papert	9	645	199	27	5	3,354
17	Diarbekir	4	690	324	18	9	3,467
18	Harpoot	27	2,058	496	49	9	8,549
19	Eghin	4	541	215	13	9	1,967
20	Tchimishgazak	12	456	272	14	1	1,458
21	Arabkir	18	713	223	23	2	2,457
22	Tcharsanjak	12	617	189	16	2	1,576
23	Edessa	8	1,091	571	19	7	2,997
24	Bagdad	2	68	46	9	2	1,566
25	Aintab	9	898	708	31	27	8,580
26	Antioch	10	440	47	10	....	1,520
27	Aleppo	2	438	249	12	6	3,841
28	Yozgat	12	1,197	557	30	13	10,075
29	Hajin	4	508	69	10	2	1,319
30	Gurin	12	736	78	18	2	3,670
31	Zeitoun	10	605	85	14	1	1,348
32	Darende	2	260	70	4	1	500
33	Divrig	10	757	100	18	2	3,440
		478	38,274	15,640	1,005	398	236,672

No.	Provinces	Schools Parochial Semi-public	Boy Pupils	Girl Pupils	Men Teachers	Women Teachers	Monthly Income and Expense
1	Brousa	16	1,345	733	34	20	10,509½
2	Balikeser-Bandirma	8	700	634	22	13	7,560
3	Sebaste	46	4,072	549	62	11	6,245
4	Tokad	11	1,408	558	37	13	7,852
5	Bitlis	12	571	63	20	....	2,346¾
6	Erzingan	22	1,389	475	54	9	8,427
7	Kemakh	13	646	28	16	....	1,476¾
8	Bayazid	6	338	54	11	2	1,011½
9	Moush	23	1,034	284	31	4	2,439 1-3
10	Van	21	1,323	554	47	12	5,618½
11	Lim and Gudoutz	3	203	56	5	1	38
12	Agtamar	32	1,106	132	36	....	4,961½
13	Terchan	12	485	10	12	....	737
14	Sber-Gisgim	3	80	....	3	....	194
15	Pasen....	7	315	....	7	....	437
16	Khinous	8	352	15	11	1	1,273
17	Tigrancerta	2	180	....	5	....	582
18	Palou	8	505	50	14	1	1,500
19	Kastamouni	3	110	50	2	....	380
20	Konia	3	213	137	6	6	3,200
21	Armash	2	190	110	5	1	730
22	Egypt	2	223	217	16	7	14,921
23	Cyprus	3	63	37	8	1	5,304
24	Bulgaria	10	534	413	23	10	12,725
25	Sis	7	476	165	15	4	3,889
26	Adana	25	1,947	808	40	29	11,945
27	Malatia	9	872	230	16	3	1,920
28	Marash	23	1,361	378	34	10	8,073
		340	20,041	6,740	592	158	126,295 2-5
	Total of preceding page	478	38,274	15,640	1,005	398	236,672
	Grand Total	818	60,315	22,380	1,597	556	362,976 2-5

The curricula of these schools represented the counterparts of similar French elementary and secondary schools, especially adapted to the local and specific needs of the Armenians residing in Turkey. In these schools the teaching of foreign languages held a prominent place. Turkish, the language of the ruling people, and French, English, and in some localities German, were taught. There were also the sciences; and religion and ethics were taught as formal subjects. Mathematics, geography, drawing, writing, and music also had their place. One is impressed by the fact that this presents an overloaded curriculum. But the school hours and length of school year were longer than those of the American schools. In general, schools began their work at 8 A. M. and come to an end at 5 P. M., with short recesses at intervals. The summer vacation, generally speaking, lasted only two months.

Another peculiar feature of the Armenian school system was to be found in the fact that in the majority of schools there was not a hard and fast line of demarcation between the elementary and secondary schools. They usually were housed in the same building, although the first three primary grades were usually located in a separate building.

Mr. Lynch[1], in describing the Armenian schools at Van with a population of 30,000 Armenians, says:

> "The Armenians possess no less than eleven such institutions, each dispensing both primary and secondary education, and counting as many as 2180 pupils in all, of whom about 800 are girls. The majority, namely six, are purely ecclesiastical foundations, that is to say, they are attached to the churches and are largely supported by church funds.

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[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, by Lynch, pp. 96-97, Vol. II published in 1901.

"Except for protection, which is afforded in their relations with government by the close connection with the ecclesiastical organization, the Armenian schools display a detachment from hierarchical influences which no friend of true education can fail to admire. The teachers are almost without exception laymen; the knowledge is allowed to pursue its own salvation."

IX. The Kindergarten in Constantinople.—The first Armenian kindergarten was established in Constantinople by Mrs. Kayiane Madakian. She came from Russian Armenia to Constantinople, and in 1888-89 opened the first kindergarten in Kadi-Keugh. She later organized many institutions of similar nature in different parts of Constantinople. Kindergartens were also established in the provinces after a short time.

X. The First Attempts to Establish Institutions of Higher Learning.—With the growth and development of the primary and secondary schools in Constantinople, the leaders felt the necessity of establishing institutions of higher learning to prepare leaders.

A. The College at Scutari.[1]—This institution in its establishment and rapid decay, shows the spasmodic yet ardent efforts of a people to establish a central college without necessary funds, without an appropriate building, and without a corps of trained teachers. It was established in 1838, closed in 1841, reopened in 1850, and transferred to the building of the Armenian hospital "Sourp Purgitch." At first it was to be financed by the funds of the Armenian monastery of Jerusalem, who were to make an initial payment of 200,000 piasters for the building, and 60,000 piasters annually for the maintenance of the college. For this reason it was called the College of Jerusalem (Jemaran Sourp Yerousaghemi). The congregation of the monastery of Jerusalem objected to the sum of the annual payment. Students were selected from among the graduates of Armenian schools. They were boarding students. The number reached fifty. The sciences and languages were emphasized, besides the religious subjects. The conservative group of the "Amiras" were opposed to this school. In 1841 a board of trustees was organized, consisting of people other than the "Amiras."

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[1] A detailed account of this institution is given in Azkabadoum, Vol. III, by Malakia Ormanian, p. 3718.

In 1851 the school was transferred to the buildings of the Armenian hospital as a theological seminary, and within two years it was closed.

The short and stormy life of this institution gave rise to the well-known struggle between the "Amiras" and the representatives of the common people.

This institution produced a small group of leaders, such as: Archbishop Eghishe Tourian, who is now the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem; Mihran Oughourigian, an able writer; and Mrs. Zabelle Asadour, one of the most gifted representatives of Armenian womanhood, a poet, textbook writer, and teacher.

B. **Noubar-Shahnazarian College.**—Garabet Vartabet Shahnazarian, born in Persia, 1810-1865, left his legacy, amounting to 1000 Turkish pounds, for the establishment of a college in Sis, Cilicia. This fund was not adequate and he entrusted it to the care of the famous Armenian minister and reformer in Egypt, His Excellency Noubar. The latter was to execute this bequest as soon as the fund would grow to 4000 pounds.

Bishop Nerses Varjabedian, an illustrious patriarch of Constantinople, persuaded Noubar to add a sufficient amount of money to the already existing fund, and in this way patronize a college, Noubar-Shahnazarian, to be opened in Constantinople. This was done, and to meet the special stipulations of the bequest of Shahnazarian, ten boarding students from Cilicia were admitted free.

This college was established in 1866 at Khadi-Keugh. Bishop Varjabedian not only supervised the building and foundation of this institution, but also acted as its superintendent. "The development and reputation of the Noubar-Shahnazarian school, and the praiseworthy productivity of its graduates are well known among our people. Suffice it to say that the efforts and labors of Bishop Nerses crowned the last wishes of Shahnazarian and the beneficence of the Noubars."[1]

Many of its alumni served the nation in posts of leadership. Especially one of them, Mr. Minas Tcheraz, 1852-1929, rendered such singular service to the nation through his activities as educator, journalist, writer, and reformer, that the Noubar-Shahnazarian college really deserves high reputation which it enjoyed in its short-lived existence, as a center of higher education for Armenia.

In the next chapter we shall discuss in detail the contributions of the more permanent and modern institutions of higher learning, supported and maintained by the Armenians, in Constantinople as well as in Erzeroum and elsewhere.

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[1] Cf. Azkabadoum, in Armenian, Vol. III, by Malakia Ormanian, p. 4323. Translated by the author.

CHAPTER XV

Educational Societies and Higher Institutions

I. The Educational Societies and Education for the Masses.—In the preceding chapter we set forth the fact that in Constantinople a network of parochial schools was spread out for the education of the poorer children and that this movement gradually penetrated into the interior provinces. In addition to the educational work of the Armenian church, there arose a number of educational societies having for their purpose the encouraging of education in the interior provinces. The soul for this educational movement is expressed in one of the statements made by a member of the Araration Society: "I think we all realize fully that the future of the Armenian people is found in education. There is no salvation for us outside of Education."[1]

The awakening consciousness for a united, educated, and freed nation served as a stimulus to redouble educational efforts, especially for the promotion of education among the masses in the interior. As the people living in these remote parts of Armenia were in utter darkness, and without financial means to support any kind of educational program, a number of educational societies were organized in Constantinople to face this situation. The detailed story of these societies will not be traced by us, as it would carry us too far afield. We shall merely touch upon the general history and contribution of these organizations.

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[1] Cf. Pedagogical Magazine (Mangavarjagan Tert), 1879, No. 8 February, p. 60, published in Caucasus, Armenia. Translated by the author.

A. **The United Societies**[1].—This educational society was a union of three formerly separate educational societies. They all had the same purpose but worked in different and separate fields in Armenia.

The first of these societies was **The Araratian**, which was organized in 1876. Its purpose was to open schools primarily in Vasbourakan, in the province of Van, and in the provinces of Garin and Harpoot.

The second was **Tebrotzasiratz Arevelian**, which was formed in the same year. Its field of activity embraced the provinces of Moush, Bitlis, and Tigranocerta.

The third society was **The Cilician**[2], which was organized by the students and the alumni of Noubar-Shanazarian College in 1871. It was reorganized in 1879, and its field of activity embraced the district of Cilicia.

Fortunately the Armenians still enjoyed, at this time, a sort of internal freedom of action to carry on their educational work unhampered. This permitted these societies to vie with one another in their activity. Schools were opened one after another; teachers and money were supplied from Constantinople. These new schools and teachers introduced among their compatriots of the interior provinces the new ideas of pedagogy and thought.

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[1] The history of this society is to be written in the near future by M. Natanian, one of its members and workers. He kindly furnished us the important facts relative to this organization.

[2] A detailed history and the constitution of this society can be had in the **Pedagogical Magazine** (Mangavarjagan Tert), June, 1879, No. 12, p. 11.

The Araratian Society not only organized rural schools in the district of Van, but in 1879 also opened a Normal School in the same district. This central school was intended to prepare teachers for the district. The Armenians in the Caucasus took great interest in this work. Especially Kribor Arzrouni, the editor of **Mishak**, encouraged financial subscriptions and furnished leaders of this educational movement with necessary funds.

The Tebrotzasiratz Society, in addition to elementary schools, opened a secondary school in Moush, which was a school of high standing for that district.

The Cilician Society also organized, in addition to elementary schools, a secondary school in Adana, the Apkarian Varjaran.

For a time these three societies continued their activity separately. Finally there arose the need of amalgamating them for the sake of economy and efficiency, and they yielded to the popular demand to do so. And in May, 1880, the desired union took place, and the new organization was called The United Societies of Armenia.

The district superintendent of the Araration Society, Mr. Mugrditch Portoukalian, came under the suspicion of the Turkish authorities of Van as a man of revolutionary ideas. As a result he was recalled to Constantinople in 1881, and in this way the Normal School of Van was closed in September of the same year.

The schools supported by the societies in Armenia proper, were sixty in number. The whole district was reorganized as one educational district, with Mr. Mugrditch Sariyan as superintendent, and Mr. Margos

Natanian, former instructor of the Normal School of Van, as his assistant. The secondary school at Moush became the central station for the superintendents, who made occasional tours to various educational centers, to direct, promote, and examine the work of the schools.

The Cilician district, however, had its own district superintendent.

This condition of affairs lasted until 1886. At that time Turkish persecutions began, and on December 15, the district superintendent, Mugrditch Sariyan, and his assistant, Mr. Margos Natanian, were arrested. The former was imprisoned in Tchangiry; he was later put in a prison at Tripolis. In 1895 he was released. Mr. Natanian, too, was imprisoned in Bitlis until March 20, 1887; and after three months of further imprisonment in Constantinople he was exiled to Jerusalem. Almost all the educational leaders of the Society were subjected to similar persecutions, and as a result the schools were closed.

In 1908, however, with the onset of reforms in the Turkish empire, "The United Societies of Armenia" was reorganized, and the same schools were reopened. But in 1914 Turkish persecutions again put an end to these educational efforts.

The following statistical table on the next page will demonstrate the extent of the educational activity of this Society.

In 1910-1911 the United Societies of Armenia maintained the following schools[1]:

Name	Pupils	Teachers	Annual Expenditures in Turkish Pounds
Artkhan	45	2	44
Havav	268	4	122
(1 school for boys)			
(1 school for girls)			
Moush (Nersesian)	122	7	180
Vartenis	75	3	61
Pourkh-Talvorig	21	1	39
Hartk-Talvorig	20	1	7
Abghank	10	1	5
Hekadoun-Talvorig	14	1	8
*Sighert	176	7	167
(school for boys)			
*Teh	90	3	17
*Tchok	32	1	17
*Rundvan	40	2	30
*Dousadak	33	1	18
*Koubin	44	2	21
*Malafan	25	1	20
*Hazzo	89	3	49
Tigranocerta District			
*Hazro	120	3	50
*Grasira	70	2	33
*Kerik	25	1	20
*Goundenjano	35	1	22
Hashter	45	1	16
*Helin	35	2	16
*Bashnik	35	1	18
*Abdi-Isapounar	25	1	20
Cilicia District			
For the general superintendent and agriculturist			270
Tchok-Marsovan	440	9	213
(1 school for boys)			
(1 school for girls)			
(1 primary school)			
Kesab	212	7	143
(1 school for boys)			
(1 school for girls)			
Hajin	539	16	319.50
(1 secondary school)			
(1 elementary school)			
(1 primary school)			
Fekke	35	1	8
*Shar-Dere	70	2	23

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*Armenian Benevolent Union (to be discussed in next paragraph)

[1] This statistical report was published in Nor Tbrotz, Vol. V, p. 54, numbers 1-2, published in Caucasus, Armenia.

From this list of schools one can readily gather the fact that The United Societies of Armenia opened schools chiefly in the most needy and forgotten districts. During the second year after its reorganization this society maintained 85 schools with an expenditure of 6000 Turkish pounds.

1. **The Distinctive Features of This Society.**—It was purely an educational society, free from any political or religious influences, and its primary purpose was to spread the light of learning among the masses of the rural districts. It had no permanent fund, but by means of the financial help of the Armenian Benevolent Union, after 1909, and through various other donations, the society carried on its work. Mr. M. Minasian[1] says that in the district of Upper Armenia of which he was superintendent, there were 33 schools, all of them co-educational, boys and girls either housed in the same building, or in the same building in separate classrooms.

> "I can point out two distinctive features of the work of the Educational Societies. (1) The administration of the schools was free from encroachments by the local authorities. In the contracts agreed upon between me and the local school boards I made it specifically clear that they had no right to interfere in the affairs of the school. The principal of the school was the only responsible person in these matters, and he was appointed by me only. (2) The second point of importance was that the central body invested the superintendent of the school district, appointed by them, with full executive powers. After

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[1] In a letter to the author, Mr. Minasian characterized the distinctive features of this society. He was the district superintendent of its schools in 1908 and after. Himself a graduate of Harvard and Yale, he introduced American ideals and methods among his compatriots. He also published for two years, (1903-1905), an educational magazine, Louys, which embodied American advanced ideas. His book, Educational Ideals, in Armenian, proved also very helpful in disseminating new thoughts in education.

they appointed me to the post, they left me free to do everything that was necessary for the efficiency of the schools. I selected the teachers, decided on their salaries, etc. This freedom of action in the case of the district superintendent characterized the administrative machinery of this great educational society.

"As soon as I entered upon my particular field of activity, I observed that book knowledge was emphasized more than anything else. The training of the observation and judgment of the pupils did not receive any attention. Even the object lesson was taught from a textbook. The pupil only read the textbook, memorized all there was in it, without even observing those objects, comparing them, handling them, and judging them.

"I tried to remedy the situation. Observing that teachers needed training, I organized, with the consent of the central authorities, a Summer School for Teachers. The first summer session took place in Garin, the second one at Keghikasaba, and the third one at Palou-Havav monastery. The first year I was all alone. The second year Professor Hovh. Boujikanian joined me. And the third year H. Srabian, of Euphrates College, H. Boujikanian, D. Lulejian, Mardiros Boujikanian all offered courses.

"About sixty teachers took summer courses in these sessions. Educational psychology, methods of teaching, elementary sciences, as well as music, formed our program. Those who attended these courses for four consecutive years, after passing required examinations, received diplomas.

"After such ineffective efforts at improving the training of rural teachers, I entered my work as the principal of the Normal School at Van. Here, in addition to other subjects, I introduced practical subjects such as manual training and agriculture. All the sciences were taught by experimental methods. This was rather an innovation in educational methods. Even in American colleges in Armenia this method was not emphasized as much as it was in our school."[1]

In 1914 the Turkish persecutions again put an end to these beneficial efforts in the field of education.

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[1] In a personal letter to the author, by Mr. M. Minasian.

B. The Armenian General Benevolent Union.— This society was founded in Cairo, Egypt, in 1906. His Excellency, Boghos Noubar, has been a very important factor in the foundation of this society. This represents one of the highly organized societies among the Armenians, with a solid foundation and a promise of continuity. It has a permanent fund. Recently, with the addition of the Melkonian fund, 500,000 English pounds, the administration of which according to the stipulations of the testators, is entrusted to the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the total assets of the society reached about three and a quarter million dollars. Although the chief purpose of the society is benevolence, it has greatly encouraged education among the Armenian masses. From the statistical table of the schools maintained by the Armenian United Societies, we observed that the Armenian General Benevolent Union supported several of those schools. Its general policy has been to furnish financial aid to already existing Armenian Educational Societies and thus help to carry on their educational work. Recently, however, owing to the disorganization of these societies, and in order to meet the growing exigencies of the education of the Armenian orphan, the Armenian General Benevolent Union has been directly maintaining schools in various districts. A detailed report[1] is beyond the limit of our time and space. But here is a concise picture, portraying the educational activities of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

During the first three years, from May, 1906, to the 1909 theArmenian General Benevolent Union spent 165 pounds for educational work. The total income of this period was 3,800 pounds, most of which was devoted to alleviate the sufferings of Armenian women and orphaned children.

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[1] This report is kindly furnished to us by Mr. Arshag Tchobanian, a well-known Armenian author and critic of Paris who took special pains to prepare it from the archives of the Armenian Benevolent Union, the central office of which is now in Paris, France.

During 1910 the Armenian General Benevolent Union saw the need of supporting educational programs. For this reason an understanding was reached between the two organizations, whereby the Armenian Benevolent Union agreed to support 20 elementary schools already established by the United Societies of Armenia. During this year an orphanage, Kelekian by name, was organized in the name of Dikran Khan Kelekian, who donated 1,000 pounds in addition to the Manchester Fund of 250 pounds, donated by the Trustees of Cyprus orphanage of 1897.

In the years 1909-1910, the Armenian General Benevolent Union spent 1,735 pounds for educational work. Schools were opened especially in localities which had long been neglected and could not support their own schools.

A Normal School at Van was organized through the efforts of the Central Committee. The first class was organized with 30 students and the administration of the school was entrusted to the United Societies of Armenia.

In 1912-1913 the number of schools receiving aid was increased to 52. The Union has, through the United Societies spent £1,792, £155 through Azkanouer Hayouhyatz, £120 through the Tbrotzaser Dignantz Society, £500 for the Normal School at Van, £1,805 for Kelekian orphanage, with a total of £6,994. In 1913 the number of elementary schools maintained by the

Union reached 38, 27 being in Armenia and 11 in Cilicia.
The number of pupils was 2,400.

In 1914-1919. This period corresponds to the period of war and Armenian massacres, deportations, etc. For this reason all schools were discontinued. On November 20, 1915, a school was organized in Port Said, and given the name Sisvan. This school served to educate the refugee children of the Suedia Armenians who were saved by way of the Mediterranean ports through French warships, 4,200 persons in all.

In the Sisvan school 1,250 pupils were trained and cared for.

In 1914 the Union spent £1,978 for education.

In 1917-1919 in the Sisvan orphanage 2,400 orphans were cared for. There were 17 teachers, of both sexes, 44 assistant teachers, and 14 other employees.

In 1917, under the instructorship of Mr. Reynolds, an industrial department was added to this orphanage and a Boy Scout group was organized. Students were taught tailoring, shoe-making, cabinet making, etc. In 1919 the Sisvan school was closed, the parents departing for their respective homes.

During the three years, 1917-1919, the total expenditure of the Sisvan school was 8,868 Egyptian pounds.

Orphan Schools.—Since the Armistice the Union has maintained orphanages and schools combined. These institutions have three departments, asylum, school, and industrial plant.

Great care is given to the training of character of the orphans sheltered in these institutions.

The orphanage of Mersin cost the Union £8,933 in 1918-1919.

In 1919 Kelekian orphanage at Deort-yol was reopened, with 200 orphans, 9 teachers, and 15 other workers. In 1919 a sum of £4,650 was spent. For the orphanage at Hajin £266 were spent.

In 1921 the Union spent £5,720 for the Kelekian orphanage, 11,362 Egyptian pounds for Sisvan orphanage—school of Deort-yol, 2,109 Egyptian pounds for the Cilician orphanage of Aleppo; a total of 34,086 Egyptian pounds.

In 1922 the Union cared for 816 orphans with the co-operation of the Near East Relief, maintaining two orphanages in Jerusalem. Five orphanages were maintained during this year, with 1,633 orphans.

In 1922 the Union continued to render financial aid to the schools at Sueidia, to the amount of 467 Egyptian pounds, and 255 pounds to the Noubarian schools with 250 pupils at Alexandretta.

In 1923 the Union maintained five orphanages and rendered financial assistance to seven schools, and spent 14,704 pounds for the two orphanages of Jerusalem and Vasbourakan.

In 1924 the Union sent 250 orphans, graduated from the orphanages, to the Republic of Armenia, furnishing $25,000 for their maintenance for one year. The Union also rendered financial assistance to various refugee schools.

In 1926 the Union maintained only three orphanages.

The Melkonian fund of 500,000 pounds was entrusted to the Union, and, according to the stipulations the Union sent 3000 pounds to the Armenian University at Erivan, 1000 pounds (annually) to the theological seminary at Jerusalem, and the remainder of the income was spent for the maintenance of the Melkonian institution at Cyprus.

In 1927 the Union spent 3,134 pounds for the Kelekian-Sisvan orphanage.

In 1927 the Union rendered financial aid to the schools organized by the Armenian refugees in Greece, Bulgaria, Lebanon, and various cities in Syria.

In 1927-1928 the funds allotted to educational work totaled 10,243 pounds.

The Noubarian Educational Foundation.—His Excellency, Boghos Noubar, the founder and president for life of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, has always encouraged educational work among the Armenians. In 1924 he donated a permanent fund for the financial assistance of needy Armenian students. This fund has been entrusted to the care of the University of Bruxelles (Fondation Universitaire). The Armenian students are selected according to their mental, moral, and physical abilities and preference is given to those students who are orphans and intend to go back to Armenia and serve there in their chosen fields, as teachers, engineers, etc. The total fund for this purpose was 19,000 pounds sterling. In a few years it has increased to 26,000 pounds sterling.

In 1924-1925 this foundation rendered assistance to eight students. In 1926-1927 there were twelve students whose expenses were paid entirely from this fund while two others received partial aid.

This completes the picture of the educational activities of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

C. **Minor Societies.**—Besides these two major organizations there were a number of minor societies which devoted their energies to the promotion of education among the Armenians. Among these Tbrotzaser Dignantz and Azkanouer Hayouhyatz deserve special mention. Both of them worked for the education of the Armenian girls. In 1879, the Tbrotzaser Dignantz society established a training school for women teachers in Constantinople, "thereby filled a great need of the nation. The alumnae of this school became missionaries of enlightenment and spread learning and education to the remotest corners of the provincial towns."[1]

In 1918 this society cared for 500 orphan girls and continued its activity abroad since 1923. Its headquarters are now located in Paris, and the Society expects to raise the standards of the already existing girls' school, to meet the special needs of Armenian women who desire higher education.

II. **Higher Educational Institutions for Leaders.** While on the one hand the American missionaries and the Armenian church, as well as the Educational Societies encouraged education among the masses, the Armenian leaders saw the paramount importance of preparing leaders for the nation as well. For this reason, alongside of the American colleges, the Armenians endeavored to establish collegiate institutions of their own.

A. **The Armenian Central College in Constantinople** was founded in 1886, in the building near the

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[1] Cf. Gotchnag, Vol. XXVIII, Dec. 1, 1928, p. 1526. Translated by the author.

Galata church, under the initiative of Patriarch Nerses Varjabetian. Minas Tcheraz was the president of the college for the first three years. Then Mr. Haroutiun Mosditchian, Nalpantian, Khachadourian, Mr. K. K. Kafafian, and others, directed the affairs of the college. During the first period very prominent men served as teachers: Thomas Terzian, Madatia Karakashian, Eghia Demirjibashian, Archbishop Malakia Ormanian, Bishop Karekin Sirvantziantz, Hrant, H. Baronian, and others. During the second period men like Archbishop Matthew Ismirlian and Bishop Elishe Tourian taught in the college.

This institution was not a boarding school. It represented the upward extension of all the secondary schools in Constantinople. Its primary purpose was to offer an opportunity for collegiate education to needy Armenian students.

It has served its purpose splendidly. Mr. A. Tchobanian[2], himself the most brilliant alumnus of this institution, characterizes this school as one that has rendered a great service to the nation, graduating from its ranks very prominent men in all branches of science, literature, arts, industry, commerce, teaching, etc. The following alumni are very prominent: Ervant Manouelian, hystologist and bacteriologist who has been serving for years in the Pasteur Institution; architects like M. Mihrtadiantz, A. Nedourian, Sarkisian, etc.; chemists like V. Mesropian; writers like Tchifte Saraf, Michael Shamdanjian, Ervant Sirmakeshkhanlian, Misak Meszarentz, etc.; Dr. Artinian, physician and philologist; painters like Dikran Esayan, Rafael Shishmanian; Armenian leaders like Bedros

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[1] In a letter to the author.

Parian, Sarkis Minasian, Agasi Toursarkisian, and others.

This institution is still in existence, although it has lost much of its former splendor. Mr. Adrouni is at the head of this institution.

B. **The Berbarian College.**—This is an outstanding collegiate institution which was founded in 1876 by Reteos Berberian, an educator of initiative, profound erudition, and wide vision. The purpose of this college was to give to the nation enlightened gentlemen. The founder himself managed the affairs of the college until 1907, when he died. His two sons, educated in Swiss and French universities, continued their father's work. In 1924 the Berberian College was transferred from Constantinople to Cairo, Egypt, where it has remained.

There is doubtless no Armenian educational leader who has exerted so much influence upon the Armenian nation as Reteos Berberian, through his educational writings and chiefly through his untiring efforts to keep his college always in the front rank of Armenian collegiate institutions. Mr. Berberian wielded his influence also as the chairman of the Central Educational Council of Armenia. He was editor-in-chief of the only Educational Magazine, Masis, which was first published in Constantinople, 1878. His educational writings are contained in a large volume, "Tbrotz and Tbroutiun." In Armenian literature he was the chief interpreter of French educational thought. The French master whose ideas he assimilated was Gabriel Compayré.

Berberian College served the Armenian nation for half a century. Its graduates, 500 in number, occupy high positions in all works of Armenian society, A great teacher and present day Armenian educator of note, Mr. Hovhannes Hintlian, graduated from this college in 1882. Noted teachers like M. Kalfayan, Aram Nighogosian, Bedros Garabetian, Mardiros Nalpantian, etc., are graduates of this college. Physicians like Paul Kololian of Paris, writers like Etvart Kolanjian, Dikran Cheugurian, Roupen Chilingirian, etc., are products of this college.

The college is composed of eight classes, three preparatory and five of secondary and collegiate standing. There is no hard and fast line of demarcation between the preparatory and higher divisions of the college. Languages (Armenian, French, Turkish), Lecons de choses (object lessons), geography, history religion, arithmetic, and geometry, drawing and manuel training make up the subjects of study in the preparatory department. The same languages are continued and English and German are added in the upper division, while morals, natural sciences, chemistry, algebra, geometry, history, geography, music, writing, commerce, philosophy and social sciences, pedagogy, are taught especially in the higher grades. During the last two years students may elect either the literary group of subjects or the commercial or scientific. Great emphasis is laid upon the study of Armenian as well as other languages.

Character training is carried on not only by means of formal lessons, but also minute checking[1] of the individual student's conduct, by offering a homelike moral atmosphere in the school, and by affording opportunities for aesthetic training.

The Berberian College at the present time continues its work in Cairo, Egypt, along almost the same lines[1], under the direction of Mr. O. R. Berberian, of the Faculty of Science of Lausanne, and Shahan R. Berberian, of the Faculty of Literature of the University of Paris.

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[1] Cf. the catalogue, 1912-1913, p. 43.

C. **The Sanasarian College.**—This was the only Armenian college established in a provincial town, in 1881. In 1883 the college was transferred to its present premises. Mr. Sanasarian, a wealthy Armenian, who died in 1890, bequeathed about £30,000 for the purpose of establishing an Armenian college. Three young men were selected and sent to Germany to be prepared for administrative work in the college. The work of Madatian and Mr. Apoulian, the directors, has been noteworthy.

The college has always aimed at training young Armenian men who would be willing to go into the remotest corners of provincial towns and work as teachers and leaders there. In this purpose it has succeeded. In the district of Garin, according to answers to a questionnaire[2], 60 to 65 per cent of all Armenian teachers were graduates of the Sanasarian College. During the thirty-two years of its existence, the college trained 513 boarding and 327 day students, with an expenditure of 100,000 pounds, spending annually 3,500 pounds.

The college has stressed the study of the Armenian language and literature as well as scientific and historical subjects. Mr. H. F. B. Lynch praises the work of the college highly: "The technical school is well provided with baths and all kinds of implements, and some excellent work is forthcoming from the young handicraftsmen. Boys enter the college in about the tenth year and leave at the age of seventeen or eighteen. The course comprises a preparatory class and six higher classes. Armenian and Turkish and of foreign tongues French and German are included, but neither Latin or Greek. The history of the Armenian church and nation are imparted under great difficulties without the aid of books. Algebra and geometry, geography, botany, zoology, astronomy, chemistry and physics, and commercial book-keeping can also be learnt. Music is studied and practiced with much appreciation."[1]

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[1] Cf. the catalogue, 1924.

[2] Cf. Hairenik, Monthly, Vol. VI, 1928, No. 6, p. 110, an article by Mr. Leon Karakashian.

Among the alumni the names of the artists Sarkis Khachadourian and Makhokian stand out most prominently as great painters of modern Armenia.

D. **Armash, 1889-1914.**—As a center of theological studies the monastery of Armash was known in history even during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Armash enjoyed prosperity during the time of Bishop Agavni. But present day Armenians remember Armash as one of the most illustrious centers of Armenian theological and historical studies since 1889. It was at this time that a theological seminary was established in Armash, during the patriarchate of Archbishop Khoren Ashikian, and under the leadership of Archbishop Malakia Ormanian. The school was formally opened on September 18, 1889. Malakia Ormanian, a doctor from the college at Rome, was the organizer, administrator and professor of Armash, while Bishop Elishe Tourian, poet, writer, critic, and a man of wide erudition in Armenian literature, was the soul of this institution. The latter occupied the seat of the Armenian patriarchate in Jerusalem, and died recently.

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[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, H. F. B. Lynch, Vol. II, p. 213-215.

The first graduates of this great institution, five young men, received the degree of Vartabet (doctor) on May 4, 1895, with great ceremony. This institution, henceforth, gave the nation a very limited number of select ecclesiastical leaders, who dared to serve their compatriots after the massacres of 1895 in the God-forsaken provincial towns.

The history of the achievements of these young Vartabets is narrated in a volume, published on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Armash Seminary. It is not our purpose to give the detailed story of the rise, growth, and decline of this institution. Suffice it to say that at the present time some of the highest positions of the Armenian church are filled by the alumni of Armash. Great writers and scholars like Bishop Papken Gulesserian, Archbishop Torkom Koushakian, Archbishop Mesrop Naroyan (now patriarch of Constantinople), Bishop Ervant Perdahjian, Shahe Vartabed Kasparian, Bishop Karekin Khachadourian (now prelate of the Armenians of California) speak highly the work of the Seminary of Armash. Unfortunately, owing to political conditions, Armash has lost its place among the foremost theological seminaries of Armenia. But Bishop Gulesserian, together with Patriarch Elishe Tourian and a corps of splendid teachers, are duplicating the work of Armash in the **Armenian monastery at Jerusalem.** This school is supported by donations of Mr. Gulbenkian of New York and by contributions received from the Melkonian fund, left under the administration of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

The first graduates of the Jerusalem seminary, two young men, received their diplomas last year, and they are continuing their studies in the universities of England. The English Episcopalian Church of the United States is contributing to this institution, by contributing the salary of a teacher, Rev. Bridgeman, teacher of the English Language and Literature.

Bishop Papken Gulesserian, as the co-worker of the Katholikos of Cilicia, now in Syria, has organized a Theological Seminary, to be opened in September, 1930, at Beyrouth. This institution will be headed by Shahe Vartabet Kasbarian, of Boston, an alumnus of Cambridge Theological Seminary. It is planned that in this school a course for prospective teachers will also be organized.

In this chapter we have attempted to give a picture of the educational activities of Armenian Educational Societies, as well as of the work of purely Armenian collegiate institutions.

In the next chapter we shall complete the picture by portraying the present day educational conditions and problems among the Armenians dispersed to the four corners of the globe.

CHAPTER XVI

Armenian Education After the World War

Education in Turkish Armenia was reduced after the World War to a simple though tragic problem, namely, the care and education of the orphans. The policy of extermination of all Christians and subject races, initiated by the bloody Sultan Abdul Hamid, was carried to its extreme during the stormy days of the World War by the Young Turk regime of Enver and Talaat.[1] The tragic details of the grim story of wholesale massacres, deportations, and imprisonments of the Armenian population of Turkey constitute the "Blackest Page" of the history of human civilization.

I. **Historical Background of the Armenian Question.**—It is not out of place to state briefly how this bloody policy gradually developed and culminated in the gravest crime of the centuries—the crime of the wholesale murder of over one million innocent men, women, and children—all non-combatants.

During the period of decadence of Turkish rule, the interior provinces of Turkey were submerged in a chaotic condition. The Armenian people in these districts, who were gradually awakening to a consciousness of progress through the influence of European and American contacts, could no longer bear the prevailing anarchy, chaos, pillage, and rape. Therefore, a clamor for reform began to be raised by the Armenian leaders. The Russian-Turkish War of 1877, in which Turkey was crushed under the Russian onslaughts on both fronts in Asia, under the leadership of the Armenian generals, Lazaroff and Melikoff, as well as in Europe, gave an opportunity to the Armenians to present their legitimate claims to the San-Stefano peace conference. Russia was the champion of small nations, whereas, the other European powers, jealous of Russia's preponderance of influence, supported Turkey. In the Conference of San Stefano, the Armenians secured Article 16: "Comme l'évacuation par les troupes russes des territoires qu'elles occupent en Armenie, et qui doivent etre restitués a la Turquie, pourrait y donner lieu a des conflits et a des complications prejudiciables aux bonnes relations des deux pays, La Sublime Porte s'engage a realiser, sans plus de retard, les améliorations et les reformes exigées par les besoins locaux dans les provinces habitées par les Armeniens, et a garantir leur securité contre les Kurds et les Circassiens."[1]

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[1] Cf., for the authentic record of the Turkish atrocities, **Ambassador Morgenthau's Story**, by Henry Morgenthau, New York, 1918, and **Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, (1915-1916)**, documents presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon, by Viscount Bryce, London, 1916.

The responsibility of the enforcement of this article was left to Russia, according to the treaty of San-Stefano. But this treaty was revised at Berlin, and on June 13, 1878, the Armenian leaders presented their case to Berlin. Here Article 16 of San-Stefano in favor of the Armenians, was incorporated in Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin. The wording was left almost the same, but in place of Russia, all the great powers of Europe took upon themselves the supervision over the execution of the reforms. The result was a tragi-comedy. Sultan Hamid could not play with Russia, but he was an expert in playing the interests of the European powers against one another and profiting by the confusion thus created. Thus he carried out his policy of extermination of all subject races. That this policy of slow but gradual extermination did its work effectively, the following statistical table[1] demonstrates fully:

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[1] Cf. La Question Armenienne a la Lumiere des Documents, by Marcel Leart, p. 27. "As the evacuation by Russian troops of the territories which they now occupy in Armenia, and which must be restored to Turkey, might give place to conflicts and complications injurious to the good relations of the two countries, the Sublime Porte promises to carry out without further delay certain ameliorations and reforms exacted by the local needs in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and Circassians." Translated by the author.

The Fate of the Armenians During the Last Thirty Years, a Comparative Statistical Table from 1882-1912

	1882	1912	Increase	Decrease	Decrease
Turkish Armenia	1,630,000	1,018,000	....	612,000	
Cilicia	380,000	407,000	27,000	....	
In other parts of Turkish Empire	650,000	675,000	25,000	....	
Total	2,660,000	2,100,000	52,000	612,000	560,000

The decrease of 560,000 Armenians during the last thirty years takes on a more serious character when one considers also that during this period 1,000,000 Armenians were added by reason of an increasing birth rate, over-balancing the death rate. Adding this number to the above, one finds a decrease of 1,560,000 Armenians during the last thirty years. In the massacres of 1895-1896, 300,000 Armenians were murdered by Turks; in the massacres of Cilicia, perpetrated by young Turks in 1909, about 30,000 Armenians were killed; and during the wholesale massacres of 1914-1915, over 1,000,000 Armenian men and women were exterminated.

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[1] Cf. La Question Armenienne a la Lumiere des Documents, by Marcel Leart, p. 63.

According to **Teotig**, the total Armenian population in Turkey was 2,026,700 before the war. After the massacres and deportations this number was reduced to 1,056,000, of which 592,000 survived in miraculous ways, 58,000 orphans were left among the Turks, 5,800 orphans were rescued, and 400,000 Armenians took refuge in Caucasus Russia.

The Armenian question thus finds its origin in the treaties of San-Stefano and Berlin. At first the Armenians demanded the inauguration of reforms in the provinces of Armenia. Sultan Hamid duped the European powers as well as the Armenians by false promises. In the meantime he intensified his policy of extermination. Thereupon the Armenians stiffened their front and clamored for autonomy in place of reforms. Finally, at the close of the World War, the Armenian leaders demanded an independent Armenian home. Their legitimate hopes were shattered with the Treaty of Sevre. But out of the Russian revolution there appeared on the horizon the autonomous Republic of Armenia.

II. Training of the Orphans — The Greatest Problem.—We shall discuss separately the happy situation of the Armenians in Russia, who were fortunate to create an autonomous Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus. There is nothing left at present in the field of education for the Armenians under Turkish rule except the task of the proper training and education of their orphans. These orphans and all the remnants of the Armenians no longer live within the confines of Turkey, but in the Caucasus, Syria, Palestine, Greece, etc.

It is easy to realize, furthermore, that a nation whose remnants have been dispersed to the four corners of the world cannot carry out a uniform and systematic educational policy and program. Every locality in which an Armenian refugee colony is found has its particular problems growing out of local needs.

The most encouraging aspect of all this gloomy picture is the fact that wherever an Armenian colony is settled, no matter whether in camps or make-shift barracas (cottages), there is established a school, elementary or secondary. In more prosperous localities there are a number of schools. For instance, in Aleppo (Syria) there are now eight schools supported by the Armenians through donations or through tuitions or in any legitimate manner imaginable. "The Armenian national co-educational school, with its primary grades and kindergarten, 800 pupils; the Armenian protestant school, 500 pupils; the Armenian Catholic school, 500 pupils; Gurtasiratz co-educational school, 550 pupils; Armenian co-educational school, 150 pupils; Charsanjak co-educational school, 170 pupils; Nersesian co-educational school, 250 pupils; Sahakian school, 180 pupils; total 4,000 pupils. About 80 students are attending foreign institutions of higher learning."[1] These schools in some cases lack equipment to meet the local demands. To an impartial observer it is clear that the Armenians are still clinging to their faith that "there is no salvation for Armenians outside of education."

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[1] Cf. Gotchnag, Vol. XXVIII, May 26, 1928, No. 21, Correspondence from Aleppo.

In due course of time these schools will no doubt become more efficient, especially through the financial and moral support of various Educational Societies, above all through the assistance and supervision of the Armenian General Benevolent Union. They need uniformity and standardization. Furthermore, the duplication of effort in different schools of similar program is a waste. The need of amalgamation and unification is more than apparent.

But to my mind the greatest lack in the education of Armenian refugees in different colonies—in Syria and Palestine, where there are over 125,000 Armenian settlers—is found in the absence of adequate facilities for the preparation of teachers. No reform, however important, can be instituted without an army of capable and especially trained teachers. The Armenian teachers now employed in these refugee schools are sincere men, no doubt; but with only few exceptions none of them are trained in teachers' colleges and certified by a responsible board of education. Without comprehending the purpose, nature, and methods of education (pedagogy), without thoroughly understanding the laws of learning and the psychology of children, and without being conversant with the best and most efficient methods of school management and administration, one can hardly expect that the Armenian teachers in the refugee centers will measure up to the highest standards of pedagogy. The Armenian leaders realize this lack and have recently been endeavoring to remedy it.

It is also encouraging to note that the former American college of Aintab was recently reorganized, and has already opened its doors in Aleppo (Syria) to meet the needs of higher education for the Armenian youth. It is to be hoped that in this college consideration will be duly given to the training of teachers, as we understand that in this college, leaders, ministers, and teachers will be trained.

Another encouraging fact is observed in the recent serious efforts of the Armenians to reorganize the Armenian Katholikosate of Cilicia. A great majority of the refugees in Syria are the remnants of the Armenians who formerly lived in Cilicia. Syria being contiguous to Cilicia and a small part of former Cilician territory being left under the French mandate in Syria, the Armenian colonists of this section have recently reorganized their former Cilician religious organization. As Katholikos of the Cilician Armenians, Archbishop Sahak Khabayan, a very old gentleman, who is still living, through his initiative and with the co-operation of the Armenians scattered in various colonies, instituted a new religious statute; and a co-worker with the present Katholikos has been chosen in the person of Bishop Papken Gulesserian. There is no doubt that as soon as the new organization is ratified by the French government it will be set in motion. With the leadership of Bishop Gulessarian the schools of all refugee colonies in Syria will be systematized, standardized, and encouraged, and the proposed Armenian Central College is already planned to offer its courses in the fall of 1930.

III. The Contributions of the Near East Relief to Orphan Education[1].—The Near East Relief was first organized on September 16, 1915, under the name of Armenian Relief Committee, in the office of Cleveland H. Dodge and with the participation of a group of "some twenty men, each representing a phase of American philanthropic work in the Near East. The war was on in Turkey. A cable dispatch had come from Constantinople by way of the State Department, from the American ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, stating that distress was indescribable and increasing, and called for immediate aid. Members of the group had received through other sources reports sufficient to convince all that the Armenians especially were in grave distress. The company formed itself into the 'Armenian Relief Committee' . . . and voted to attempt to raise $100,000 as a relief fund."[2] This organization was later called "The Armenian and Syrian Relief Committee," and still later "The Near East Relief Corporation." This organization had become so important that by a special act of the American Congress in August, 1919, it was recognized as a national corporation, members of the Relief Committee constituting the original incorporators. During its twelve years of activity the American Near East Relief managed a total of more than $105,000,000 in the discharge of its responsibilities.

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[1] Cf. the pamphlets and reports of the Near East Relief. Through the kindness of the San Francisco and Los Angeles offices of the Near East Relief we have been supplied with a rich literature concerning the work of this great American organization.

[2] Cf. Twelve Years of Salvaging Life and Reconstruction, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 1.

The Near East Relief, beginning with the salvaging of the remnants of the Armenian refugees, extended its activity to the relief of suffering of the Syrian, Greek, and other Christian refugees of the Near East. In its orphanages 132,000 children have for a longer or shorter time been cared for. A great majority of these orphans were Armenians. In Alexandropol (now Leninakan), a city of the Republic of Armenia, the Near East Relief has cared for 18,000 Armenian orphans, "the largest assemblage of orphans in the world. To understand the reason for so large a number of dependent children needing aid, it must be remembered that while fully a million and a half lives were saved, official reports such as that of Lord Bryce, make it clear that nearly, if not quite, a million non-combatant lives were sacrificed in connection with the persecutions, deportations, and privations of this period. The able-bodied men, those of military age, were largely exterminated, and an unprecedented number of children were left orphans or fatherless, without known responsible relatives and without country or sympathetic government that would accept responsibility for their protection."[1]

The "American Relief Committee," now "The Near East Relief Committee," extended a saving hand to these down-trodden, destitute men, women, and children; and, through the generous donations coming from men and women of the United States, the American Relief administered very efficiently to the physical and moral needs of these people. It is no exaggeration to state that in the history of Christian civilization this was an unprecedented demonstration of genuine Christian brotherhood, the loftiest principles of Christ applied in an actual field of noble endeavor. The indebtedness of the Armenian race through the Near East Relief to the philanthropy of America was properly voiced by the president of the Armenian Republic, who wrote in 1921, "America has literally saved us from starvation," while the prime minister declared, "American philanthropy has saved our nation."[1]

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[1] Cf. Near East Relief, Report, December 31, 1927, p. 13, published by United States Government Printing Office, 1928.

After ministering to the immediate needs of the refugee adults, the Near East Relief Committee began its more enduring work, namely, the education of orphans. These orphans and orphanages were taken out of the Turkish[2] territory because of the rise of Turkish nationalism. The field of activity of the Near East Relief embraced **The Greek Area,** including Greece and her islands, together with stations in Constantinople and Egypt; **the Caucasus Area,** including the Georgian Republic, Russian Armenia, and Persia; and **The Syria and Palestine Area.**

On October 31, 1927, the children in the Relief institutions were distributed according to the following statistical table[3]:

	Near East Relief Institutions	Subsidized Institutions	Subsidized Homes	Outplaced Super vision	Total
Athens	2,041	945	533	5,553	9,094
Beirut	1,343	942	723	4,895	7,903
Caucasus	3,323	4,326	255	6,325	14,229
France				700	700
Persia	85		120		205
Total	6,792	6,213	1,653	17,473	32,131

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[1] Cf. Near East Relief, Report, December 31, 1927, p. 12.

[2] Ibid, p. 13.

[3] Ibid, p. 16.

It will be noted that of the 32,131 children, 13,005 are in orphanages or institutions, and 19,126 are outplaced in homes or otherwise supervised outside the orphanages. This is in keeping with the recognized principle in child welfare work that a child should be placed in a home rather than an orphanage wherever a suitable home can be found and proper supervision given.

The Orphanage Schools.—Elementary education is offered in these orphanages in the form of six years of common school branches. The children in the orphanages are of all ages, some just beginning and others through their schooling.

Religious Education.—In the schools of the Near East Relief, religion is recognized as the basis of good character, and as such, religious training is emphasized. This religious training is free from sectarianism and is carried out through the co-operation of the Armenian, Greek, and Syrian Christian churches. The lessons "combine the best elements of oriental churches in worship and discipline with those ethical, evangelistic, and social elements more peculiar to western Christian development."[1]

Vocational Training.—The Near East Relief is endeavoring to make the orphans in their institutions capable of self-support after graduation. Hence the stress is laid on vocational training. Every trade common throughout the Near East is taught in one or more of the orphanages, such as carpentering, pottery, tailoring, blacksmithing, drawing, book binding, printing, silver-smithing, copper-smithing, electrical engineering, plumbing, rug-making, weaving, sewing, embroidering, lace-making, and household science.

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[1] Cf. Near East Relief, Report, December 31, 1927, p. 19.

As a rule one half of the day is given to school work and the rest of the day to various forms of manual training and self-help.

Agricultural Training.—As agriculture constitutes a major occupation in the Near Eastern lands, great emphasis is laid on agricultural training. The work is not only theoretical but practical as well. As a result of such training, new tools and machinery are taking the place of the old and antiquated ones. Scientific methods of cultivation and care of live-stock and poultry are being taught to the orphans.

Nurses' Training School.—The Near East Relief is encouraging the training of nurses for the care of the sick. The orphan graduates trained in nursing can support themselves by taking care of the sick and aged people. "The value of these schools can be appreciated only by people who understand both the low standards of health, sanitation, and hygiene, on the one hand, and the prejudice which has heretofore existed in these lands against nursing as a profession."[1]

The Nurses Training School in Armenia produced 126 graduate nurses, of whom 70 are already in government service. "The present demand for the graduates of nurses' training schools in Armenia far exceeds the supply. One young graduate directed a campaign against malignant malaria in fourteen villages at the foot of Mount Ararat, the patients numbering 3,300. This nurse and her assistants made 12,300 visits in a year."

Normal Training.—The intellectually gifted orphans are given a professional teachers' training. These orphanage-trained pupil-teachers make for economy in the educational work for the orphanage, and they also make a permanent contribution to the educational work in general. "The Armenian government especially, and other governments to a lesser extent, are bidding eagerly for graduates from our normal courses to take positions as teachers in government and other schools. In Armenia the Near East Relief teacher-training classes have been a major source of supply for teachers in the public schools and through them the influence of the orphanages and their American teachers reaches effectively to the remotest homes and villages of the country."[1]

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[1] Cf. Near East Relief, Report, December 31, 1927, p. 21.

It must be pointed out in connection with the educational contributions of the American Near East Relief to Armenia, that the Near East institutions introduced American methods of teaching, American ideals of living, and American efficiency in managing public institutions, whether philanthropic or educational. "The Greek patriarch of Alexandria, when in Athens recently, declared that the children in the Near East orphanages were receiving an education more practical than given in the national schools of Greece. This is also true of Persia, Syria, Palestine, and Caucasus."[1] In short, the graduates of the Near East orphanages will carry with them, wherever they go, the influence of the fine American training they received at the hands of their American teachers. The Republic of Armenia especially will be greatly benefited by this influence.

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[1] Cf. Near East Relief, Report, December 31, 1927, p. 21.

[1] Cf. Twelve Years of Salvaging Life and Reconstruction, by Dr. James L. Barton, p. 9.

Now that we have touched almost all the important phases of Armenian education in the confines of the Ottoman Empire, we shall turn our attention in the next few chapters to the development of education during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries among the Armenians formerly ruled by Russia and now living under the banner of the Republic of Armenia. As the future of the Armenian race seems to be centered in the confines of the Republic of Armenia, our analysis of the educational situation there should carry with it some significance.

CHAPTER XVII

The Development of Education Among the Armenians Under Russian Rule

Compared to the Armenian people subjected to the Turkish rule, the Armenians under the Russian flag enjoyed fair opportunities for growth and prosperity. Although it is very difficult to compare the educational conditions in these two separated sections of Armenia, it is safe to state that the Armenians living in Russian Armenia developed a more systematized and unified educational system than their compatriots in Turkey. Furthermore, pedagogy as a science grew with such rapid strides in Russian Armenia, under the influence of German education, that before the World War, in the science of education, this portion of Armenia occupied a high standing even compared with the nations of Europe. The superiority, in this respect, of the Armenians in Russia over those under Turkish rule was conceded by one of the chief leaders of the Araratian Educational Society in 1878, in the following words: "One must confess that the Armenians of Russia are more eager and solicitous to learn new pedagogic methods and practice in their schools than we, the Armenians living in Turkey."[1] The Armenian intellectuals received a thorough education in Germany, and they introduced in Russian Armenia the most advanced educational thought and practices. We shall trace, in the next four chapters, the various phases of this educational development.

I. Political Events Leading up to the Reorgani-

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[1] Cf. Pedagogical Journal, (Mangavarjagan Tert), No. 8, February, 1879, p. 58. Translated by the author.

zation of the Armenian Provinces Under the Russian Flag.—During the first part of the nineteenth century the Armenian provinces were divided between Persia and Turkey. The Armenians were dissatisfied with the rule of these two Mohametan and despotic governments. Russia, now as a growing power, began to pursue a policy of expansion, championing the cause of small Christian nations. After the war between Persia and Russia, Persia suffering a decided defeat, ceded to Russia, according to the peace treaty of Gulstan (1813), Transcaucasia, Karapagh, Kantzag, Derbent, and Bakou.

In the war of 1828 between Russia and Persia, the Armenian general, Madatoff, and the Armenian ecclesiastic Nerses Ashdaragetzi, at the head of the Armenian troops aided the Russian general, Paskevich, who defeated Shah Abbas Mirza. Thus Erivan (the present capital of the Republic of Armenia) Etchmiadzin, and Nakhichevan, came under the rule of Russia, according to the Treaty of Turkomantchay, of February 10, 1828. Several hundred Armenians migrated to Russia on this occasion. Although the Armenians were promised an autonomous government under the Russian flag, this was later denied them.

On April 14, 1828, Nicholas I made war against Turkey. The Russians conquered Gars, Akhalkalaki, Bayazid, Alashgerd, and Papert. According to the Treaty of Adrianople, Turkey recognized Russian supremacy over most of these territories. To the Turks were left Van, Bitlis, Moush, and Erzingan, districts where many Armenians lived who were anxiously waiting for emancipation. "Throughout the wars which ensued with Turkey the Armenians espoused the Russian cause; and one cannot doubt that their assistance was of considerable benefit both to Paskevich during the campaigns of 1828-1829 and to Loris Melikoff, himself of Armenian origin, in that of 1877."[1]

In 1877 the Russo-Turkish war broke out. On the Asiatic front, the Armenian generals crushed the Turkish resistance, Loris Melikoff conquered Ardahan and Bayazid, and Lazaroff seized Gars. The treaty of San-Stefano, and that of Berlin, later, settled the disputes between Russia and Turkey.

Thus a major portion of Armenia came under the Russian flag. The Tsar of Russia had, on March 21, 1828, already added to his numerous titles the title of King of Armenia when the conquered Armenian provinces were organized into one district known as District of Armenia.

The Armenian population grew in this district through the slow but gradual flow of Armenian immigration, and through an increase of the birth rate.

II. **A General Awakening of a Consciousness for Education.**—With the reign of comparative peace and prosperity in this district, the Armenians turned their attention to education. In this awakening one sees many influences and changes. With the organization of Nersesian College in Tiflis (1823) and Lazarian College (1816) in Moscow, the accounts of which will be given below, an army of young leaders were prepared. They completed their education especially in the German University of Dorpat and introduced into Armenia new ideas of progress and enlightenment.

1. The first and foremost of these young leaders

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[1] Cf. Armeniå, Travels and Studies, H. F. B. Lynch, Vol. I, p. 233.

was **Khachadour Apovian.** ..After graduating from Nersesian College, he served in his native country as a teacher. In 1830, with Professor Parrod, whom he had accompanied in the climbing of Mount Ararat, the peak of Masis, he went to the University of Dorpat, where he studied for six years. In 1836 he returned to Tiflis. The Katholikos of the time, Hovhannes Garpetzi, a reactionary and backward-looking man, forbade him to teach in Armenian schools. Therefore he entered into the service of Russian government schools. He became the principal of the Tiflis provincial school.

He also organized a private school of his own, for the education of the Armenian young people. The German traveler, Wagner, writes favorably of his school. "I visited this school several times and admired the progress of the Armenian boys. Boys of ten and fourteen years read and write well the Armenian, Georgian, Tartarian, Russian, German and French languages. In fact, I was surprised to hear that they spoke the German with correct accent and pronunciation. I observed also, when they wrote German at the dictation of their teacher, that they were well conversant with the syntax and construction of the German language. They read before me the works of Goethe and Schiller."[1]

Kachadour Apovian was the champion of the vernacular Armenian. He wrote a textbook in the vernacular, a **Primer** (Aippenaran), but the printing of it could not be carried out because of the ban of Archbishop Garabet, the prelate of Tiflis. In the preface to this book he wrote the following significant lines: "Let the learned men not be angry at me. They already read many books, and console their souls, but the common man has no book with which he could fill and comfort his leisure hours. . . . If the learned men reproach me for this book, you defend me, my dear nation, because it is my desire to serve you, to give my life for you, as long as I live."[1]

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[1] Cf. The Writers of the Nineteenth Century, (in Armenian), by Tchirakian, p. 162. Translated by the author.

The lofty idealism of this man, and his penetrating conception of the value of the education of the common people and his devotion to serve this neglected class of people speak eloquently of the great influence he wielded over large masses of people.

He also wrote a book, entitled "The Wounds of Armenia" (Verk Hayasdani) which inspired the youth of his time with ideals of service and a national spirit to reconstruct the Armenian fatherland.

He wrote **Nakhashavigh i beds Noravarjitz,** a textbook for beginners, which was published in 1862. According to Mr. Papazian, this textbook contains the alphabet and a primer, a general history, Armenian history, legends, poems, and even comedies. As the forerunner of similar books for beginners in the common language of the people, it had considerable influence.

2. **Stepan Nazarian** was another leader who exerted great influence in the movement of secularization, progress, and enlightenment. He too was an alumnus of Nersesian College. He too studied in the University of Dorpat in 1832 and later received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Kazan, and until

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[2] Cf. The Literature of the Russian Armenians, (in Armenian), by V. Papazian.

his death (in 1879) served on the faculty of Lazarian College.

He exerted his influence over the Armenians chiefly through the newspaper, **Hiusisapail,** which he began editing in Moscow, in January, 1853. The purpose of this newspaper was: "To render assistance to the education of the Armenians, bridging over the space between the Armenians living in Asia and the nations of Europe."[1] . . . "The purpose of this is to spread among the Armenians of Russia such information and knowledge, which are very necessary in our own days for every person, belonging to all walks of life, for the learned and wise as well as for the merchant and artisan, for the clergyman as well as the layman, who may have a willingness to participate in the progress of this enlightened century and take advantage of it materially and spiritually."[1]

S. Nazarian championed the cause of vernacular Armenian and fought for its universal adoption. He is considered one of the founders of modern Russian Armenian vernacular speech. Unfortunately, the Armenians of Russia popularized a slightly different vernacular from that of the Armenians in Turkey. This duality of language is a problem that is waiting for satisfactory solution.

In his eagerness for reforms, he did not scorn and throw aside the old classical language; he advocated the utilization of the best elements of the classical language to enrich the modern vernacular, especially in its vocabulary. His influence has been felt especially in the movement of secularization of Armenian cultural life and education.

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[1] Cf. History of Armenian Journalism, (in Armenian), by Father Krikoris V. Kalemkerian, of Vienna, p. 173. Translated by the author.

[1] Ibid.

3. **Other Leaders.** It would carry us too far afield to describe the work and influence of several other leaders who have in the course of time worked for the regeneration of Armenian life and culture. **Mikayel Nalpantian** (1829-1866) was one of the most outstanding of these. He especially advocated the education of the Armenian girls on a basis of national culture, believing that the teaching of the Armenian language and literature should precede the teaching of any foreign language. According to him a national school for the Armenians is one which combines European enlightenment with national culture. He was also a champion of secularization in the field of education and culture. Education, according to him, must be free from ecclesiastical influences. "The time is rapidly moving forward; hence the nation must move forward."[1] Another leader of importance was **Berj Brochiantz** (1837-1907), a graduate of Nersesian College. He taught in Tiflis, Shoushi, and Erivan, as well as in his Alma Mater. Under the influence of the inspiration which he received from reading "The Wounds of Armenia," he wrote a book in the vernacular, **Sos ev Vartiter.** Rafael Patkanian, Krikor Arsrouni, Raffi, and several other more or less important leaders stirred the consciousness of the nation for a higher culture, education, and freedom of speech and life.

III. **Nerses Ashdaragetzi.**—Among the forerunners of the Armenian awakening, Nerses Ashdaragetzi[1] stands as the most towering figure. Not only was he an enlightened Armenian bishop, Katholikos, and political leader, but more than these, he was a staunch champion of education. He was the energetic man of penetrating mind who, out of nothing, created a college in Tiflis. It was in 1823 that he founded Nersesian College, which has served as an intellectual center for the Armenians living in Russia. Practically all of the leaders of the awakening were trained in this institution of higher learning. Situated as it was, in Russia, as Constantinople was in the case of the Armenians in Turkey, it produced for the Armenian nation great leaders in all walks of life. Not only literary men were trained here, but teachers as well. In the curriculum, the Armenian language and literature and foreign languages were emphasized. In 1878 pedagogy[2], applied and theoretical, and psychology became required subjects and twelve hours per week were devoted to the study of these subjects in the seventh class (senior year). This college, like all other Armenian colleges, was fashioned upon the European model, and combined the preparatory grades with the upper division grades, all consisting of seven years. The influence of Nersesian College upon the educational life of the Russian Armenians has been a lasting one.

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[1] Cf. Mikayel Nalpantian Concerning Educational Matters, article by Ardashes Apeghian, Nor Tbrotz (New School), Vol. V, Numbers 33-36. Translated by the author.

IV. [3]Lazarian College and Its Contributions.— The Lazarians constituted an Armenian family of nobility interested in noble enterprises. A scion of this family, Hovhannes, died October 24, 1801, leaving two hundred thousand rubles for the establishment of an institution for higher education for the Armenians, to be situated in Moscow. His brother, Hovagim, the executor of this will, realizing that this fund was inadequate, added an additional one hundred thousand rubles. The construction of the buildings began in 1813, and the classes were organized in 1816. Hovagim wished to place the school under the supervision of the Russian government, and it was named Armenian Gymnasium of Lazarian, for higher sciences and oriental languages. The supervision of the school was first left to the Lazarian scions. Later, in 1828, it passed to Count Alexander Penkendorf. After a period of time, the Lazarian school changed its original character and became a center of linguistic studies. It became international in character, its doors being opened to the children of all races and peoples. The languages taught were Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Georgian, Tartarian, Russian, French, and German. The General courses were limited to the curricula of schools preparatory to university. July 21, 1839, a department was added to train higher ecclesiastics.

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[1] For detailed biographical information, cf. **The Biography of Nerses the Fifth, Ashdaragetzi, Katholikos**, (in Armenian), by Alexander Eritziantz, Tiflis.

[2] Cf. **Pedagogical Journal** (Mangavarjagan Tert), Vol. I, No. 1, July 1878, p. 60.

[3] Cf. for a detailed account, that of Malakia Ormanian, in **Azkabadoum**, Vol. III, p. 3475.

Lazarian College, even though it was situated in Moscow, removed from the Armenian centers, exercised a tremendous influence upon Armenian education, especially because a large number of Armenian educational leaders were trained in this institution. Bishop Michael Sallantian, M. Emin, Muserian, and Khalatian were some of the luminaries of Lazarian College. Leo, in **The Jubilee of the Armenian Book,** summarizes the influence of Lazarian College very aptly: "Lazarian

College, from the beginning of its foundation until the seventies, was one of the foremost educational centers of the Russian Armenians, if not the only one."

Vying with these two institutions of higher learning, **The Armenian College at Calcutta,** founded in 1821, served the youth of the Armenian colony of India as well as the young men of the Armenians living in Persia and Russia. This college, one of the oldest Armenian colleges, enjoys a large endowment and has the rank of a preparatory college to the National University of India, as well as to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. One of its many graduates is M. Emin, the professor of Lazarian College and a very noted linguist.

V. **The University of Dorpat and Its Influence.**—In the training of the leaders of the Armenian awakenening in Russian Armenia, the influence of the German University of Dorpat—now Yuriev—has been unique. Apovian, Nazarian, and a host of Armenian intellectuals here received their education, their ideals of service, and their ideas of freedom. Dorpat was a Russian town, in Livonia. The University was founded in 1632, by Gustavus Adolphus, and was re-established by Alexander 1, in 1802. It was German first, but since May, 1887, it has been thoroughly Russianized.

There were twenty Armenian students in the University of Dorpat in the fifties of the nineteenth century. "The influence of the University of Dorpat was marked by the fact that the Armenian students not only awoke to consciousness of progress and self-knowledge, but also gained a very ardent love for their nation and fatherland, for everything which was native and national."[1] "The ideals of the Armenian students of Dorpat were to place the books and sciences in the hands and in the service of the common people, at the same time arousing in them true patriotism."[2] For a nation just awakening from the slumber of centuries of darkness and ignorance, the idealistic influence of this one-time German University was very valuable, and productive of great results.

VI. The Elementary Educational System and Polojenye.—In the beginning of the nineteenth century the Armenians had very few parochial schools. When Russia came in possession of the Armenian provinces, she found there, already established, an Armenian elementary school system. True, its schools at that time were not of high standing and were lacking especially in unification. Nevertheless, each monastery and church supported an elementary school for the children of the parish. At about 1830 the Armenian ecclesiastical affairs presented a deplorable picture. The corruption during the pontificate of the Katholikos, Hovhannes Garpetzi[3], was at its worst. Bishop Nerses Ashdaragetzi revolted against these lamentable conditions, but in vain. He was sent to Bessarabia, through the influence of the Russian bureaucracy. Etchmiadzin was suffocating under a heavy burden of debts. The Katholikos, instead of encouraging education, tried to discourage it. He endeavored to hamper the work and influence of the Nersesian College and to lower its standards. For a short time he succeeded in doing this.

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[1] Cf. **The Literature of the Russian Armenians,** (in Armenian), by V. Papazian, p. 360. Translated by the author.

[2] **Ibid,** p. 362.

[3] For a detailed discussion of these questions, cf. **The Katholikosate of All Armenia, and the Armenians of the Caucasus,** (in Armenian), by Alexander Eritziantz.

But things could not and did not go on in this way. The Russian government desired to exercise an absolute control over the internal affairs of Armenia and to introduce system in the administration of church and school affairs. For this purpose a statute was written and presented to the Armenian Katholikos for accepttance and unconditional submission. This is known as **Polojenye,** a kind of internal constitution for the Armenian community in Russia. This statute was ratified by Nicholas I, on March 11, 1836. This historic statute contained 10 chapters and 141 articles. We are here not concerned with its various aspects. Suffice it to say that through Polojenye the Russian government took full control of Armenian internal affairs. In spite of its evil effects, it achieved at least one good thing. It introduced a regularity and a unified system in the administration and finances of the Armenian schools.

Chapter VIII of Polojenye deals with educational matters, under the heading **For the Schools of the Armenian Gregorian Church.**[1]

"**Article 112.**—For the theological training of the youth belonging to the Armenian Gregorian Church there shall be established seminaries, one in the monastery of Etchmiadzin, and another in the center of each ecclesiastical diocese.

"**Article 113.**—The seminary in the monastery of Etchmiadzin shall be under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Katholikos, and the other schools of similar nature shall be under the district authorities.

"**Article 114.**—The authorities of the Gregorian Armenian school, who have charge of the religious and moral training of their children must, under the supervision and leadership of the archbishops of the various dioceses, prepare detailed rules and regulations governing the courses of studies and the duration of schooling and all the internal arrangements of the schools. These regulations must be presented to the Synod of Etchmiadzin of the Gregorian Armenians. The Synod after studying the matter and coming to an agreement on these rules and regulations and those pertaining to the school at Etchmiadzin, should present it to the Ministry of Interior Affairs. . . . In addition to other subjects of study, the Russian language, history, and geography must be included.

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[1] Cf. **Polojenye,** in ancient Armenian, in the work of Alexander Eritziantz, pp. 582-583. Translated by the author.

"Article 115.—In all churches and monasteries where there is a school, the usual amount of money should be collected and every three months these sums must be sent to the treasurer of that diocese to be used for the schools. Furthermore, the monasteries taking an active interest in the Armenian Gregorian Church, each year should appropriate from their incomes special sums for the administration of the parochial schools of the diocese in which they are found.

"Article 116.—The parochial schools of the Gregorian Armenian Church should, at the end of the year, present to the authorities of the diocese a detailed account of their affairs, their incomes and expenditures, and total amount of sums raised."

A regular system of parochial schools was thus established for the Armenians and supported by the Armenian churches and monasteries with the consent of the Russian government. The function of these schools was that of our public elementary schools.

"Schools of five classes were frequently attached to the churches; and the pupils who desired to pursue their studies still further passed to the so-called seminary of the diocese in which they lived. In this manner it was possible for a youth to receive all but the highest university education in his native language and through his native institutions. It is true that the Minister of the interior had a right of censorship but in view of the gravity of the fancied danger this safeguard was only partial. So the Government drew the pen through the third, fourth, and fifth classes and left the Armenians nothing more than the elementary course. Such action was thought to be arbitrary in view of the fact that these schools are supported by purely voluntary contributions."[1] So in 1884 the Imperial ukase provided that church schools with more than two classes should be placed upon the same basis as private schools in Russia, that it to say that the whole of the instruction should be conducted in the Russian language. This was tantamount to closing such schools. . . . . The seminaries were suffered to exist upon the basis of the decree of 1836, but their object was defined to be the preparation of clergymen to meet the requirements of the Armenian church."[2]

The Armenian leaders opposed this arbitrary rule; therefore the schools were closed. They were reopened when Katholikos Magar, in 1886, signified his willingness to submit to the provisions of the ukase, with minor modifications. As a result, the higher classes of these church schools were discontinued.

[3]The wording of the Educational Act of 1873, which with additional clauses was imposed upon the Armenian people in 1874, is as follows:

1. "The Armenian ecclesiastical authorities are charged with the duty of opening schools, directing them, and instituting proper methods of teaching, and rules and regulations, and the preservation of proper relations between pupils and teachers.

2. "It is the duty of the superintendents or directors of the public schools to supervise, according to the provisions of the imperial act of November 22, 1873, the schools opened by the Armenian ecclesiastics, and placed under their jurisdiction. The specific duties of the directors are: A. To see to it that in all schools the Russian language is taught. In the schools where general history and geography are included in the curriculum, Russian history and geography must be taught in the Russian language. B. The teachers in these schools must be citizens of

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[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, by H. F. B. Lynch, Vol. I, p. 219.

[2] Ibid, p. 220.

[3] Cf. the Armenian translation from the Russian in Nor Tbrotz (New School), Vol. VI, 1913, October-November, Numbers 8-9. Translated into English by the author.

Russia and must be men of proper conduct and character. The directors must not, however, interfere in the finances of these schools.

3. "Those schools which are confined to preparing clergymen[1], are not to be subjected to the supervision of the directors of the public schools, and they are left exclusively under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authorities.

"The curriculum and the regulations of the administration of these schools must be submitted for ratification to the proper imperial authorities. (Article 1004, M. I. H. XI Code.)"

As was mentioned above, the Armenian church authorities opposed the objectionable features of this act. The result was the closing of the Armenian schools, which were serving as the public schools for the Armenian children. The schools were reopened in 1886, in the time of Magar Katholikos, and after a short time the objectionable features of this act were made more stringent. New restrictions were introduced in 1889. The teaching of Armenian history and geography, as well as that of physics, was forbidden. The state of affairs continued in this unsatisfactory manner until 1895. The opposition[2] of the Armenian church grew stiffer, and the schools were closed for the second time. As a result of the Russo-Japanese War, the policy of Tsar Nicholas II was modified, and in 1903, August 1, an imperial ukase lifted the additional restrictions, and made the provisions of the Educational Act of 1873 the basis of the Armenian school organization. But the Armenian schools were crippled to such an extent that they could not be reopened until 1905, with a new imperial ukase on August 2, of the same year.

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[1] The seminary of Etchmiadzin.

[2] On March 26, 1898, the Russian government claimed to have a right over the management of the Armenian church properties. In 1903, June 12, the government actually confiscated these income-bearing properties. But in a few months they were returned to their legitimate owner.

VII. **George IV, the Katholikos, and the Contributions of the Kevorkian Seminary.**—Among the Armenian ecclesiastical heads, George IV was the most outstanding, second to Nerses Ashdaragetzi, in his zeal and love for educational progress. He not only encouraged the existing schools, but also established a central school of higher learning in Etchmiadzin to prepare Armenian clergymen and teachers. This school, called **Kevorkian Jemaran,** was founded during the period of 1873-1874.

Mr. Lynch, who visited this school, describes it in the following terms:

> "Edgmiatsin is rapidly developing into a home of higher education, and it enjoys the proud privilege of possessing an institution which is unique in all Armenia for the comparatively exalted standard of the course of study which it provided. The Academy at once dispenses the usual curriculum of a seminary and supplies a higher course, extending over three years. . . . The course is confined to theology, history, and literature, foreign as well as Armenian. To these subjects is added a study which the Germans have developed under the name of **Padagogik.** Within this formula, I was given to understand, are included at Edgmiatsin, besides the art of the teacher, a certain general knowledge of philosophy and psychology. The students are obliged to pass a certain standard at the end of each year. . . . . It is interesting to note that the bulk of the scholars do not in fact become enrolled in the priesthood. As a rule there are about 150 or 200 students in the various grades at the seminary and the academy—but I was informed that during the last ten years only about 15 have taken orders. The rest have become teachers in the Armenian schools or migrated to universities of Russia, or adopted professional or commercial

pursuits."[1] This school tried to evade the restrictions of the ukase of 1884. "There was no trace of any clerical bias in the choice of treatises, and the teachers in secular subjects were, I believe, all laymen. One at least was a young man of exceptional ability, trained in Europe at his own expense. It would be difficult to find among the staff of our secondary schools a master better equipped for his task. The pupils whose age extended from ten to twenty years, did not appear to acquire knowledge by rote. The principal spoke the German language fluently and was in touch with the thought of the West. Yet even this privileged institution has been clipped of much of its usefulness by being placed at an unfair advantage as compared to the Russian School. It is interdicted the seventh and eighth classes, although there can be no doubt in respect to the competency of its staff. . . . . The subjects taught in the highest class are theology and psychology, mathematics, physics, logic, modern history, and modern languages."[2]

In 1913 Kevork V. Katholikos called a convention consisting of one representative from each faculty and board of trustees of the parochial schools and on December 18, a final program of studies was agreed upon, and the schools were reorganized on a unified and systematized basis. A unification and proper coordination was instituted between the parochial schools (elementary) and the schools of the dioceses (secondary) and the Kevorkian[3] Seminary at Etchmiadzin. According to this plan the graduates of the fourth class of the parochial schools were admitted without examination to the first class of the diocese schools, and the graduates of the diocese schools were admitted without examination to Kevorkian Seminary. The period of schooling was seven years. The graduates of the higher diocese schools could finish their education in three years.

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[1] Cf. Armenia, Travels and Studies, H. F. B. Iynch, Vol. I, P. 272. Published in 1901.

[2] Ibid, p. 221.

[3] The Kevorkian Seminary was not a theological school. It was the extension of these parochial and diocese schools. Archbishop Malakia Ormanian (in Azkabadoum), Vol. III, p. 4242, one time professor in this school, says that the Kevorkian Seminary was organized on the basis of secular education rather than religious. It was an institution of higher learning, free and public, and as such its enrollment grew rapidly. His testimony agrees with that of Mr. Lynch.

In each class, 32-33 recitations were conducted weekly. This was too heavy a load for the pupil. The curriculum was crowded.

The curriculum of these schools consisted: 1. religion; 2. languages and literature; 3 mathematics; 4. history; 5. geography; 6. physics; 7. pedagogy; 8. arts—musical notes, painting, chorus and physical education.[1]

Such was the picture of the Armenian educational system among the Armenians of Russia before the World War. The entire system represented a co-ordinated whole. The schools were supported by the churches and monasteries. Supervision was placed in the hands of the bishops of each diocese, but nothwithstanding this, the education was secular, not only in the elementary and secondary schools, but also in the Kevorkian Seminary at Etchmiadzin.

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[1] For a detailed report, Cf. The New Program of the Diocese Schools, in Nor Tbrotz (New School), Vol. VI, 1913, February, No. 2.

CHAPTER XVIII

Progressive Education Among the Armenians in Caucasus Armenia

As was pointed out in the preceding chapter, the Armenians living in Eastern Armenia, under the Russian flag, enjoyed fair opportunities of making progress in education. For this they are directly indebted to Germany and Switzerland.

I. **The Influence of Germany, Russia, and Switzerland.**—As we have seen before, the first forerunners of the Armenian awakening during the nineteenth century received their education in the German University of Dorpat. The leaders of the first half of the nineteenth century, men like Apovian, Broshiantz, and Nalpantian, all of them products of German education, pointed the way to the succeeding generations of Armenian students. In fact, a great majority of the leaders of this section of Armenia were men of German education and training. The Universities of Jena, Berlin, Leipzig and others, became a place of pilgrimage for the succeeding generations of the Armenian students. There were a few prominent leaders who received their higher education in the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne, and Paris. But the educational contact with Germany was of great significance for the introduction of the most advanced thought and practice in modern pedagogy.

The reason for this fact is very plain to the student of the history of education. It was chiefly on German soil that the revolutionary ideas of Rousseau took root. It was in Germany that the work of Pestalozzi and Froebel produced results on a large scale. It was in Germany that the science of education was held in high esteem through the influence of such men as John F. Herbart, Ziller, etc. It was in Germany that the movement for public education received the greatest impetus at a very early age. Hence the contact of the Armenian leaders with German intellectual life naturally resulted in the early adoption and assimilation of the German educational thought and practice. Not only this, but the Russian intellectuals also came under the influence of German pedagogical ideas. They too, in their turn, indirectly influenced the course of educational development in Caucasus Armenia. Ninety per cent of the women teachers of the public elementary schools were graduates of the Russian Gymnasia. Switzerland shares with Germany in this influence exerted on Armenian education in the Caucasus district. About one-third of the teachers of secondary schools graduated from educational institutions of Switzerland.[1]

II. The Influence of Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart.—At a very early age the influence of these educational reformers was felt among the Armenians in eastern Armenia. But the wholesale introduction of the ideas of these great men took place at about 1878. In the Armenian pedagogical magazine (**Mangavarjagan Tert**) first published in July, 1878, we find convincing evidence of this. In the first issue we find a warm appeal for teacher training institutions. An article on the life and career of Froebel also appears. In the fifth number of the same year, a long article, continued in succeeding issues, on the work and career of Pestalozzi is published under the signature of S. Mantinian, one of the pioneering Armenian scholars in modern pedagogy. The content of this article, with its accuracy and scientific thoroughness, can be favorably compared with the best treatises on Pestalozzi published in any European tongue. Again, a long treatise on the teaching of arithmetic, published in Number 8 of the same year, by S. Mantinian, clearly shows the influence of Pestalozzi on the teaching of this subject. Mr. Mantinian shows himself to be an ardent believer of Pestalozzian ideas in education. In the eleventh number, in an article on the teaching of music, one sees distinctly that the introduction of Pestalozzian ideas in Armenian schools in teaching music, as well as Froebel's ideas on the development of children's songs, "Mutter und Koselieder," had taken place in the nineties. The problem of school health and hygiene is treated by A. Papayantz in a book especially published by the author at the same time.

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[1] Cf. Nor Tbrotz, Vol. V, p. 10.

Another celebrated Armenian scholar in pedagogical science, Mr. A. Pahatriantz, professor of Pedagogy in Simferepol Russian Normal School, in this same magazine has published a continued article on "How to Teach Reading." The ideas expressed represent the most modern ideas on this subject. He was educated in Germany. I quote here some of these ideas on the teaching of Grammar. After discussing the origins of the introduction of Grammar in the curriculum of study, he declares:

"The public school should not include the teaching of scientific grammar in its subjects of study. . . . In the public schools the teaching of grammar should not constitute an aim, but only a means to an end, a means to understand the written language correctly and then to master it. On this basis the teacher in the public elementary school should search his ambition and glory not in the fact that his pupils **know** the rules of the language and can count on their finger tips the refinements of grammar, but in the fact that they **understand** the rules of the language correctly and can **apply** them accurately. . . . . Grammar must be taught as a means to an end and in a very practical manner. . . . . the pupils must be able to **apply** the rules of grammar; hence the importance of **practical exercises.** Scientific grammar takes up the study of the **whole** language in its **entirety.** . . . . There is also a difference in the **method** of teaching grammar. Scientific grammar has as its **object** grammar itself, whereas the grammar to be taught in the elementary school should take into consideration the **subject,** namely, the pupil.[1]

Mr. A. Pahatriantz here emphasized the importance of psychological rather than logical approach to the study and teaching of grammar. His ideas, expressed in 1878, are in accord with those of John Dewey.

These fragmentary quotations give us a general idea of the status of progressive thought in educational science in Armenia beginning with 1880.

In the **Pedagogical Library,** a periodic publication, we find other evidences revealing this fact. The following excerpt shows that pedagogy as a science was held in high esteem among the Armenians of the Caucasus. "The teacher living in Armenia under Turkish rule, seeing the achievements of the Armenians of Caucasus Armenia, their enterprises, their pedagogical publications, feels that the word **pedagogy** is not a poor, meaningless phrase, but is a positive science, based on the laws of psychology. . . . Up to this time the

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[1] Cf. Pedagogical Journal (Mangavarjagan Tert), No. 4, 1878, p. 56. Translated by the author.

Armenian writers living in Armenia under the Turkish rule, have translated articles or books dealing with educational matters; but as far as we know they have not yet produced a fundamental work, written in a favorable attitude toward pedagogy, which would serve as a guide to practice in education and class room teaching."[1]

The influence of **Herbart** has been very noticeable in the pedagogical development of the Armenians under Russian rule. Some of the Armenian leaders have been trained in the pedagogical seminar of Jena and have been imbued with the Herbartian ideas. An article published in the **Pedagogical Library**, under the name of Isahak Haroutiunian, professor of psychology in Nersesian College, himself a product of German education, advocates the ideas of Herbart on **school journeys**, now called field trips. He says:

> "The school journey should help the pupil to see many things, to observe and scrutinize them, and to see the relationships with other things, so that in time of learning, he should learn much and make connections between what he learned and what he saw and experienced. . . . The pupils every day read many things in their textbooks or hear the words of their teachers on many ideas and phenomena, without being able to comprehend the essence of them because they lack the necessary observations. . . . The school journey supplies an opportunity for first hand observation. During the journey many things are considered and observed, the religious ecclesiastical and historical relics and monuments, the geographical location, and the natural phenomena."[2]

An experienced leader, a man of profound pedagogical knowledge and one who knows the theory and practice of school journeys, is recommended for the guidance of the pupils. He is to direct the attention of students to many worth-while things through a conversational or didactic method. Mr. Isahak Haroutiunian also made extensive translations from Ziller on general pedagogy[1].

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[1] Cf. Pedagogical Library (Mangavarjagen Kerataran), 1892, pp. 136-137, an article by Hovhannes Der Mirakian from Smyrna. Translated by the author.

[2] Ibid, pp. 144-149. Translated by the author.

I. **Educational Magazines and Publications.**—The literature of the Armenians in Russian Armenia is rich in educational publications of excellent worth. Besides the **Pedagogical Journal** (Mangavarjagan Tert), first published in July, 1878, and **The Pedagogical Library** (Mangavarjagan Keratararan) first published in 1892, **under the editorship of Hovhannes Parkhoutarian,** many pedagogical books were published. **Children's literature** was particularly cultivated by Lazarus Aghayan, the Andersen of Armenia, born in 1840, and by the magazines, **Hasger,** and **Aghpiur-Daraz. Nor Tbrotz** (New School), from which we have several times quoted, was an educational magazine of the first rank. The first numbers of **Nor Tbortz** appeared in 1907, in Tiflis. It continued to be published until the World War. The editors were A. Apeghian, K. Gazarian, D. Markarian, Isahak Haroutiunian, and N. Sarkisian. It was the official organ of the "Union of the Armenian Teachers of the Caucasus." The content of this magazine can be favorably compared with the best German and American educational magazines. Thoroughness, characteristic of German education, appears to be the characteristic of the Armenian educational leaders in the Caucasus. To give a general idea of the progressive thoughts on education which were constantly expressed in this magazine, I shall give in outline form some of the remarks which Isahak Haroutiunian made on the subject of **The School of Doing** (Ashkadanki Tbrotz):

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[1] In the Pedagogical Library, (Mangavarjagan Keratararan) 1892, pp. 253-293.

"In the education of the child, the psychological researches reveal that one must consider the importance of **activity, individual tendencies,** and the **inner life** of the child. The schools nowadays are trying to develop the mind of the pupil in a one-sided fashion and in the abstract without developing his activity, his originality, and his volitional tendencies on a firmer basis. . . . . The child not only should assimilate what he gathers from others, but **he must work by himself, he must do** in the school both intellectually and physically. . . . The school must adapt itself to the **present** needs of pupils, rather than catering to the future needs. . . . **The subject matter is for the pupil and not the pupil for the subject matter.** The motive powers of a living being are the motions and the will . . . . for this reason **doing** must be the basis of education,**doing, pulsating with life.** As life offers opportunities for the child to approach the realities of life, in the same manner the school must bring children in contact with the realities of life. In life one finds activity, movement, individual life . . . therefore **activity** must be the basis of teaching and learning. The lifeless description of things should not have any place in the school of doing."[1]

The philosophy of education expressed in this article represents the most advanced thought of modern pedagogy. Its author, Mr. I. Haroutiunian, was professor of phychology in Nersesian College and a Herbartian leader in Armenian pedagogy.

Important Books.—Leonard and Gertrude of Pestalozzi was translated and published in 1892, in the **Pedagogical Library**[2] (Mangavarjagan Keratararan). And Mr. Alboyajian informs us that the complete work was translated from German into Armenian by Isahak

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[1] Cf. Nor Tbrotz (New School) vol. V, 1912, September No., pp. 27-28.

[2] Cf. pp. 169-216.

Haroutiunian in 1897, at Tiflis, containing from 183 to 423 pages. Vatchakan's book on Pestalozzi was published in Tiflis in 1896. The works of the same author on Rousseau, and on the **Philanthropists** and **Humanists** were published also about that time. A. Pahatriantz published the first book on **Psychology.** T. Khizmalian wrote a modern book on **The Foundations of Teaching and Educational Psychology.** I. Haroutiunian published a **Treatise on Psychology.** B. Oltetzian wrote an abridged form of **The Psychology by Wundt.**

IV. **Teachers' Institutes and Educational** Societies.—The first Teachers Institute[1] was organized by Father Stepanos Der Stepaniantz, director of schools in the Tiflis district, in August, 1874. The Armenian teachers living in Georgia and the District of Imeret took part in this institute. Sixty teachers participated in this convention. Some of them had not even heard that there was such a science as pedagogy. Therefore the influence of this convention has been very beneficial in creating a new interest in educational matters. A uniform school program and curriculum was adopted as a result of this convention. But a more general Teachers Convention[2] took place in 1882 with the participation of teachers from all the school districts. A new program of studies for church schools was cultivated in this convention. In this way a uniform program was prepared for elementary schools, for girls' schools of six years, for secondary schools, and for the central schools in the dioceses, as well as for Kevorkian Seminary. The girls' schools of Shoushi, the Kaianiantz School of Erivan, the Hovnanian girls' school of Tiflis, the Elizabetian School of Akhaltzika, and the Garabetian School of Alexandropol were the direct results of this convention.

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[1] Cf. Pedagogical Journal, No. 2, p. 6.

[2] Cf. Nor Tbrotz, Vol. VI, 1913, October-November.

Educational Societies.—Many educational societies, more or less important, were organized among the Armenians of Caucasus Armenia.

"The Union of the Armenian Teachers of the Caucasus," organized in 1906, was one of the important societies. This society organized summer and extension courses for the Armenian teachers of the Caucasus, and also school journeys. **Nor Tbrotz,** the leading educational magazine, was the official organ of the society.

The **Summer Course**[1] for Teachers in Tiflis, in 1912, included the folowing subjects: Pedagogy and Psychology, 14 recitations; Didactics, 8; Teaching of the Armenian Language, 8; of the Russian Language, 8; of Mathematics, 6; of Physics, 6; of History, 4; of Gymnastics, 2; of Painting, 4; of Literature, 10; The New Discoveries in Pedagogy, 6; School of Hygiene, 4; total, 84 recitations. The session opened on June 5, and continued until July 5.

The Armenian Benevolent Union of the Caucasus, a distinct philanthropic organization, differing from the Society by the same name for the Armenians living under Turkish rule, although not an educational society, nevertheless rendered valuable service to the cause of education. **The Cultural Society of the Armenians of Bakou,** and **The Aramazt Society** contributed to the maintenance of several schools which were destitute of adequate financial means.

V. The Schools and School Population Before

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[1] Cf. Nor Tbrotz, Vol. V, 1912, May, 17-18.

the World War.—The following statistical figures were secured from **Nor Tbrotz.** In 1911-12 the expenditure of the school district of Erivan was 198,000 rubles for 13,000 students of both sexes; the expenditure of the Tiflis district was 150,000 rubles for 8,300 pupils. In the districts of Karapagh, Shamakh, and Hashdarkhan, in 1912-1913, there were 6,700 pupils. The total expenditure of the five districts was 455,000 rubles.

[1]In the school year of 1912-1913 there were 375 schools, 1000 teachers, and 28,000 pupils of both sexes in the Caucasus of Armenia.

[2]The following table shows the relative figures of the schools and pupils during the years 1905-1912.

	No. of Schools				**No. of Teachers**			**No. of Pupils**		
School Year	**One Year Schools**	**Two Year Schools**	**Secondary Schools**	**Total**	**Men Teachers**	**Women Teachers**	**Total**	**Boy Pupils**	**Girl Pupils**	**Total**
1905-06	64	9	..	73	168	70	238	5,862	3,218	9,080
1906-07	82	8	3	93	226	81	307	6,311	3,246	9,557
1907-08	81	8	3	92	224	82	306	6,212	3,222	9,533
1908-09	114	9	3	126	257	68	325	8,264	3,660	11,924
1909-10	138	10	3	151	272	92	371	9,011	3,771	12,782
1910-11	146	10	3	159	283	101	384	9,524	3,764	13,288
1911-12	132	19	3	154	287	99	386	9,130	3,904	13,034

[3]The following table indicates the courses of study in the different classes in the church schools before the World War.

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[1] Cf. Nor Tbrotz, Vol. VI, 1913, October, November, Numbers 8-9.

[2] Cf. Horizon, "Terton", Serial article, by Kh. Melik Parkhatourian.

[3] The Program of Studies of the Armenian Church Schools, (in Armenian), published 1908, in Tiflis.

	CLASS						
Subjects of Study	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Weekly
Religion	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
History	..	..	2	2	4	4	12
Civics	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Geography	..	..	2	2	2	2	8
Object Lesson	2	2	..	..	..	..	4
Physical Sciences	..	..	3	3	3	3	12
Hygiene	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
Armenian Language	6	6	5	5	5	4	31
Russian Language	..	..	5	5	5	4	19
Mathematics	5	5	4	3	3	3	23
Mathematical Drawing	..	..	1	1	1	1	4
Printing	2	2	1	2	1	1	9
Calligraphy	..	1	1	1	..	..	3
Music	2	2	2	2	2	1	11
Manual Training, Embroidery	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Physical Education	(2 hours each day in schools with gymnasium, schools not so equipped 25 minutes daily.)						
Total	21	22	30	30	30	30	163

The educational programs in Armenia were scarcely set in motion, during 1913-1914, when the World War broke out and upset everything. However, after the World War, the Armenians living in the Caucasus secured a better political status; hence, with rapid strides the educational movement went steadily forward.

In the next two chapters we shall give a brief account of the educational conditions developing in the rising Republic of Armenia.

CHAPTER XIX

Post-War Conditions and the Re-organization of Education in the Republic of Armenia

The World War left behind it desolation, destruction, and was responsible for the annihilation of one million innocent non-combatant Armenian men, women, and children by the Turks, and the creation of large numbers of orphans and widows. We have seen how the hope of the Armenian People for a national home in Armenia, within the confines of the Ottoman Empire, came to naught because of the machinations of European secret diplomacy, and in spite of the efforts of the American champion of the rights of small nations—the late President Woodrow Wilson. The Armenian nation finally created a national home, an autonomous republic in the Caucasus district in upper Armenia. The Armenian Republic has a territory of 11,000 square miles. A little less than one million Armenians live within its boundaries. About one and a quarter million Armenians dwell in the adjacent and neighboring countries—450,000 in Georgia; 350,000 in Aizerbaidjan; and 450,000 in Transcaucasia and Southern Russia. Reconstruction of the devastated areas, repatriation, and education are serious problems. The government is meeting them energetically.

I. **Political Events.**—How this age-long aspiration of the Armenian race for a national home was accomplished almost seems to be due to providential turn of events. The Russian revolution and the separate treaty of Brest-Litovsk between Russia and the Central Powers left Armenia in the lurch. The Russian troops abandoned all the advanced posts in the emancipated parts of Armenia. The Turks took advantage of this fact and recovered the lost territory almost without opposition, although the voluntary army of the Armenian general, Antranik, opposed the Turks and delayed their advance for a while. The latter was only a heroic episode in the course of the kaleidoscopic changes. Meanwhile, the three nations of the Caucasus, the Armenians, the Georgians, and the natives of Aizerbaidjan put up a united front and in 1918 declared their independence as a Federated Republic. Turkey and Germany accorded them recognition. After five weeks, however, the Federated Republic was dissolved, and both Armenia and Georgia declared their independence separately. In 1920 the Allied Powers recognized the independent government of Armenia. But a war broke out between Turkey and Armenia. The Dashnagist party was at the helm of the Armenian government. The Armenian opposition to the Turkish onslaught was very weak and spasmodic; so the Turks advanced rapidly into the heart of Armenia, and brought destruction and death everywhere. Fortunately the Soviet regime of Russia came to the rescue of Armenia. Thus on November 29, 1921, Armenia officially became an autonomous republic, federated with Russia, under the administration of an Armenian Soviet party.

II. The Social Ideals of the New Regime.—The Armenian people therefore accepted the Soviet regime to escape annihilation at the hands of the Turks. The believers of the Soviet ultra-radical ideals among the Armenians were very few. The Armenians as a nation did not share, and still do not share, the materialistic conceptions of the Russian revolution. However, they needed peace, and the new regime afforded them that great boon. The Armenian people were anxious to unfold their intellectual and constructive abilities in the pursuit of cultural accomplishments. The new regime offered this opportunity in an almost unprecedented manner. The history of Armenian education and cultural progress under the new regime has been marvelous. One can scarcely believe how, in the course of seven or eight years, the educational agencies in Armenia accomplished things which do credit to any nation and which are admired by visitors. For this reason, and because the fate of Armenia is inextricably bound up with that of Russia, the Armenian nation as a whole, except the Dashnagist party—a Socialist and Menshevik organization—recognized the new regime in spite of its undesirable socialistic ideals.

[1]"**November 29 saved the birth and perpetuated the political existence of the Armenian nation.** . . . . The nation accepted the new order because she was compelled to do so, but this fact does not take away anything from the worth of the event which occurred on the twenty-ninth of November. Through this event we found our political security and a means of our political evolution. Without that, any political aspiration of the Armenian people would have been synonymous to moans, complaints, and dreams."[2] He goes on to state that during the first six years of its existence, ultra-radical leaders like Ashod Hovhannessian have

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[1] November 29, 1921 is the date of the beginning of the new regime.

[2] Cf. **Seven Years of the New Regime**, an article by Hratch Ervant, a champion of nationalism and democracy, in **Baikar**, Nov. 29, 1927, Vol. V, No. 277. Translated by the author.

been pushed aside from active participation in the governmental affairs and more moderate and wiser leaders are now at the helm of the political administration. Mr. Mihran Sivasly, a well-known Armenian leader and champion of nationalism, in evaluating the present political situation in Armenia, says, "If Russia did not exist, it were necesary to create one,"[1] for the safety and protection of Armenia. By this he emphasizes the fact that the fate of Armenia is inextricably interwoven with that of Russia. Therefore, it is futile for the Armenians to fight against the new regime, or to oppose it and thereby hamper its constructive programs, peace, rehabilitation, repatriation, liquidation of illiteracy, mass education, etc. It is the opinion even of the most anti-socialistic conservative leaders of the Armenian people that "governments come and governments go," but the fact of the autonomous Armenian state remains. They hope that some day the present regime will see the futility of adhering to the materialistic ideals of Lenin,—false in social philosophy as well as in its psychology—and in this way the Armenian nation will enjoy not only the benefits of peace, enlightenment, and education, but also the pride of being ruled by a political regime which is in harmony with that of the western democratic countries. In the meantime, the historian of Armenian education cannot help expressing his admiration, love, and enthusiasm for the present leaders of public education and for the advancement of cultural progress in Armenia.

III. The Reorganization of Education.—In the aftermath of the World War the schools in Armenia suffered immensely. When under the new regime the political life of Armenia was reorganized, attention was at once given to the reorganization of the schools. The result was the creation of a **unified compulsory public school system, secular, supported and supervised by the state.** At the head of this new educational organization stands the **Comissariat of Education (Lousavoroutian Comissariat.)** [1]The Comissariat of Education in its turn organized six responsible educational committees:

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[1] Ibid, translated by the author.

1. Committee of the Academy of Science and Art.
2. Committee of Administration, with functions of administration, organization, and finance of schools.
3. Committee of Polytechnic and Socialistic Education.
4. Committee of Technological and Industrial Education for the Workers.
5. The Committee of General Enlightenment and Illumination of the People.
6. Committee of Official Publications.

Each committee is divided into sub-committees. Local school boards are responsibles to the latter.

A Unified School System.—The Commissariat of Education attempted to create a unified school system, beginning with pre-school education and ending in the university. According to the educational act of 1925, the Armenian educational system was reorganized as follows: **Pre-school education,** three years; **Primary education,** four years; **Secondary education,** three years; **Higher education,** two years; **University educa-**

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[1] Cf. The Official Report of the Government, in Khorhertayin Hayastan, in 1920-1925, p. 289. This is a stupendous volume covering 471 pages.

tion, five years. Actually, however, in the Republic of Armenia there are now two types of schools for public education: 1. School of first degree, **four year school;** 2. School of second degree, **seven year school.** The higher schools (two years), leading to the university are still in process of organization. There are no hard and fast lines of demarcation between these schools. There is a unified and continued program of studies, especially prepared by the central Commissariat of Education. The entrance from the lower school into the higher school is automatic. The methods of teaching are the same in all the schools. They are very simple in the lower schools and become gradually more and more advanced in the higher schools.

In August, 1923, the Compulsory Education Act was passed. The proper age for entrance into the public schools was made four years. Pre-school education begins at this age. At eight years the pupil should enter the public school which he can leave at twelve. It is expected that the age limit of leaving the public school will be raised. At the present time, it is very difficult to carry out literally the provisions of the Compulsory Education Act. In time, however, it will become an established policy. This is expected to be achieved in 1935-1936, when it will be enforced energetically.

Besides the public schools, there are various types of educational institutions and agencies. A detailed account and statistics of these will be given in the next chapter.

IV. **Liquidation of Illiteracy.**—In Chapter XVI it was shown that the Armenian church endeavored to educate the youth of the nation in parochial schools, financed by the church itself, and that these schools were hampered in their progress by the nationalistic regime of Tsar Nicholas II. They were closed twice, and when they were reopened in 1905, they were greatly crippled in their function. This alone accounts for the fact that within the confines of Armenia in the Caucasus, especially in the village districts, illiteracy increased. Almost 70 per cent of the rural population could not read nor write. The leaders of this section of Armenia were superior to those living in Turkey.

The new regime, therefore, turned its attention to the problem of lowering the rate of illiteracy. Schools for adults were opened, where young men of eighteen years of age and up could receive free education. Besides these schools, **Cottage Reading Rooms, Clubs,** and other similar agencies are struggling to solve the problem of illiteracy. [1]In 1923-1924 a little less than half a million adults attended these schools and educational centers. "It is a very small thing to teach a man how to read and write; it is necessary to make him half literate and then fully literate. For this reason great attention is paid to this problem and a network of institutions are spreading more and more widely in Armenia."[2] In 1924-1925 the work of the Cottage Libraries doubled its scope."[3]

In combatting illiteracy the government is utilizing the energies of the students of the seven year schools, the advanced students taking an active part in the struggle. In this way it is believed, "the students will have an opportunity to express their tendencies for self-activity and to apply their knowledge, and to make accessible to the mass of common people what they learned in schools."[1] The schools are urged to take active part in the affairs of the community, and to improve the conditions of the peasants and workers in various ways. It is expected that the curse of illiteracy will partly be eliminated by 1933-1934.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination (Joghovertagan Lousavoroutiun), the official educational magazine, No. 11, 1927, p. 7.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

V. **Educational Ideals.**—The educational ideals of the new regime are greatly colored by their social and economic ideas.

Education must be real, education must be for life, education must be universal, and especially it must be the privilege of the lower classes—workers and peasants. These are the ideals of education reiterated almost in all the issues of the official educational magazine, **The Popular Illumination. Education for life** means that the school must represent **life as it is,** and not as it **ought to be.** The real life and not the ideal life, the material life and not the immaterial or spiritual life is considered as the problem of the schools. Here one clearly sees the realistic and materialistic philosophy of Leninism. In Number 4 of **The Popular Illumination,** it is clearly seen that the materialistic view of life, (weltanschauung) must govern all educational endeavors.

If the school must be related to real life, it must take into consideration the actual environment of the child and must be closely related to the life of the community in which he lives. The students must actually take part in the social, economic, and industrial activities of the community. They must not only learn about the problems involved in these activities, but must actively participate in their solution. Hence much stress is laid upon industrial, agricultural and politechnic subjects. In addition to these, humanistic studies, such as history, literature, etc., are organized on a different basis, and with a different purpose. To cultivate the spirit of **collectivism** and **social co-operative production** is the chief aim of these subjects. The importance of this subject-matter which is called **Hasarakidoutiun** is highly stressed in the Republic of Armenia. Its aims and methods are described in **The Popular Illumination,** No. 4, 1928, and Nos. 7 and 8, 1927. In order to bring the school in closer contact with the community, a new subject-matter called **Kavarakidoutiun** (the science dealing with the problems of the interior provinces) has been added. The students are actually taken into the heart of the provinces and rural districts and they are given opportunities to observe the life and the activities of these communities. Mere observation is not considered to be sufficient; therefore, they are urged to participate in the affairs of the community.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 6, 1927, p. 4. Translated by the author.

In connection with the development of the spirit of collectivism, the students are given opportunity to become accustomed to useful **production.** Production is another word which is reiterated almost in every number of **The Popular Illumination.** The dignity of labor is exalted in every conceivable way. The pupils must learn to engage in productive labor suited to their particular capacities. This is another educational concept that holds an important place in the minds of the educational leaders. In short, the philosophy of education is permeated through and through with one idea, namely, that the collective self is of more importance than the individual self. Individuals must be sunk in collectivism.

VI. **Educational Methods.**—The old methods of education have been discarded and new methods are being adopted. The selection of methods is governed by the aims and purposes of education. It has been shown that the purpose of education is active participation in life—in the life of the community, and in the activities of production on a collectivistic and cooperative basis. As the purpose of education is to be entirely practical and real, the methods of teaching must be practical and real. **Complex** is a term to describe a method somewhat similar to our **project method.** [1]There are three steps in the application of this method.

The First Step.—The Teacher, through a didactic method, presents to the pupils certain aspects of a problem. The pupils select the problem. The teacher already has in his mind a detailed plan for the solution of the problem, but he is not supposed to tell it directly to his pupils. He must lead the students to select a plan almost similar to his own for the solution of the **Complex.**

The Second Step consists of finding out the actual knowledge of the pupil in the various aspects of the Complex; also his attitude toward it, and his experiences toward it. The pupil must be led by the teacher to express himself in every possible means of expression in order that he may gain habits of self-expression in an objective way.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 4, 1926, pp. 32-35.

The Third Step consists of gathering new data and working on them by means of new observations and experiments. Excursions, researches, and the collection of concrete data are the activities characterizing the third step. Diagrams, statistical tables and synthesis are the final phases of the solution of the **Complex.**

It is believed that through this method the pupil will find an opportunity for self-activity and self-expression. It is contended also, that according to the Complex method of teaching there will be no opportunity for the isolation of the various subject-matters and the gulf which separates one subject-matter from the other is bridged over. Throughout all this one can see the traces of the modified concept of Herbart in regard to correlation and appreciation, as well, as the motor expression theory of Froebel.

In different classes the pupils take up different **complexes.** In one[1] class the **Complex of Community** is studied. In another the **Economic Status of the Local Community** furnishes the material. In still another group the **Interrelations of City and Country Life** are solved by this method.

Another plan which is in use, after having been tried in an experimental school in Erivan, is the **Dalton plan,** to meet the problem of the individual differences of the school children. The Dalton plan is well-known in the United States; hence it will be superfluous to elaborate on this method.

Our own **project method**[2] also is much talked of and discussed in educational circles. It is asserted, however, that the project method needs to be modified to encourage the spirit of collectivism. Therefore, the projects are expected to be solved by groups of co-operating students rather than by one individual student.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 4, 1928, p. 345.

[2] Formulated by John Dewey, W. Kilpatrick and others.

Laboratory and Experimental Methods are emphasized also. The real motive in the selection of these methods is to make education practical, to have it related to life, and to lead to actual participation in the activities of life.

VII. **Teacher Training.**—We have seen that during the seven or eight years of the administration of the new regime, educational theory and practice have been almost transformed. This calls for trained teachers. For this purpose summer extension courses for teachers have been organized, as early as 1921. A Teachers' College was organized in 1922, but this college is now incorporated in the National University, and constitutes one of the Faculties (Departments). The training of new teachers is being carried on with tireless effort.

VIII. **School Buildings.**—The new Republic was faced with the problem of adequate school buildings. The old buildings, especially in the rural districts, did not measure up to the requirements of modern ideas of school construction. The Commissariat of Education has initiated an extensive plan of school construction and has already started a strong campaign to accelerate the movement for better school buildings. From the official **Album**[1] of plans of the school buildings, we are able to appreciate the tremendous task to be accomplished in this direction. There is no doubt that in a short period of time these constructive plans will be materialized, and rural as well as city districts will possess adequate school buildings. In fine, the Republic of Armenia is in the midst of an unprecedented educational reorganization. The philosophy of education is certainly extremistic but actual school practice seems to be above reproach. The budget of the government for 1928-1929 will be 16,244,860 rubles. This money will be distributed as follows: for administrative work, 1,858,000 rubles; for cultural and social work, 4,803,400 rubles; for economic and productive purposes, 8,200,700; for miscellaneous needs, 1,381,000 rubles. These figures clearly demonstrate that the new regime in Armenia considers the cultural and educational development of the new republic of paramount importance and appropriates comparatively large sums of money for this purpose.

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[1] Cf. Official Album of plans of the School Buildings, published by the Commissariat of Education in 1927.

In the next chapter, we shall by means of concrete statistical figures give a complete picture of present-day educational conditions of Armenia.

CHAPTER XX

Present Day Education in The Republic of Armenia

We have seen that under the new regime in the Republic of Armenia a great deal of attention is given to the problem of education for children as well as for adults. A rapid perusal of statistical data brings out the fact that elementary education is given more emphasis than secondary.

I. **Types of Schools.**—There are three gradations in the public school organization. At the bottom we find the (1) **village community center schools** for the youngest children; (2) **the kindergarten**; (3) **four-year schools**, elementary school for children from 8 to 12, in rural districts; (4) **seven year schools**, three advanced classes added to the four grades of the elementary school, in cities; (5) **nine year schools**, two more advanced classes added to the **seven year schools**, corresponding to our Junior Colleges, in the capital and in the larger cities. Nine year **schools** are not yet fully developed. (6) **Technical schools**, for the workers' children in cities; (7) **agricultural schools**, for the peasants' children in rural districts; (8) **art schools**, to prepare professional artists; (9) **adult schools**; (10) **workers' universities**, to recruit qualified leaders from the ranks of factory workers; (11) **the state university**, to crown the system of public education.

Let us briefly and separately present the characteristic phases of each one of these educational institutions.

I. **The Community Center Schools in Rural Districts.**—These represent an effort to offer pre-school training to the children of neglected rural districts. During the summer months the government organizes these out-of-doors schools, which are established in the center of the village. Very small children with their mothers, usually illiterate, are gathered in these centers, and the following program is carried out:

a. Children are offered an opportunity to learn proper hygienic habits. The use of soap and towels, and bathing and swimming are taught.

b. Children are organized in groups to train for self-service, self-help, and also for mutual helpfulness and ideals of collectivism and co-operation.

c. They are offered opportunities to observe the life of the village in all its phases. They gain knowledge in the use of agricultural tools and machinery. They obtain rudimentary notions about the interrelations of rural activities and the economic phases of city life, as well as about community holidays, etc., by means of excursions, story-telling, and discussions.

d. An effort is made to free the child from superstitious fears, and to inculcate in them a sane knowledge of the working of natural phenomena. They work in their own truck gardens, struggle against the pests and insects, etc.

e. Medical inspection is afforded the young children of the village.

f. Various athletic games are encouraged, with the purpose of developing the spirit of collectivism and co-operation.

This is entirely a new type of institution. It has grown out of the particular needs of peasant life in the remotest corners of the Republic. "The community center school is becoming a center of cultural pursuits (in the villages) which on account of its close contact with the home, especially with the mother, is proving to be a revolutionizing factor in favor of the improvement of rural life."[1]

The motto is: "Lead the child through the village community center to the kindergarten."

In 1926-1927 there were institutions of this type in the eight provinces of Armenia (in all except Taralakiaz) totaling 26 village community center schools with 1,755 pupils. The commissariat of education expects that in 1930-1931 the number of these institutions will be increased to 197.

2. **Kindergartens.**—In 1920-1921 there were very few kindergartens. The Froebelian and Montessory ideals and methods were prevalent. The modified form of Froebelianism was more in line with the educational conceptions of the leaders of the Republic than the old type of Froebelianism. But a new modification is introduced in the kindergarten ideals and methods. According to the new plan, the child must be brought in actual contact with the real activities of the community in which he is living. He must participate as far as possible in some of these activities in his own way. His childish interests must be linked with the real interests of the community. It is expected that in this way the kindergarten in rural districts will become a revolutionizing factor in the improvement of rural community life.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 11, 1927, p. 51.

In 1930-1931, the government expects to have 208 kindergartens in the Republic of Armenia.

The American Near East Relief Committee is already caring for 5000 children of pre-school age in Armenia.

3. **Four Year Schools.** — This institution functions as the public elementary school in the Republic of Armenia. Students enter this school at the age of eight, and normally finish the course at twelve. But the age limit varies a great deal at the present time owing to the newness of the public school organization and the weakness of compulsory education enforcement.

4. **Seven Year Schools.**—These schools correspond to our institutions of secondary education. They are established usually in the cities, and more of them are gradually expected to be established in rural districts. A rapid survey of their curriculum—to be given below—is sufficient to get an idea of the type of training given in these institutions.

5. **Nine Year Schools.**—These schools represent the extension of secondary education. They combine the four years of elementary schools, three years of purely secondary education, and two years of gymnasium or higher education, corresponding to the training given in our Junior College. There are at present very few nine years schools established.

6. **Technical Schools.** The Republic of Armenia is a small country of the size of Belgium. A considerable part of the country is uninhabitable on account of marshes and unirrigated and unreclaimed lands. This accounts for the need of industrial and technical train-

ing. The present government emphasizes this phase of the educational program. The country needs reconstruction and the need of technically prepared workers is of paramount importance. In November, 1921, the first industrial and technical school was established in Erivan. In 1922 another was established in Leninakan. All industrial occupations which are found in Armenia are taught in these schools. Carpentering, masonry, metal-working, electrical engineering, stenography, accounting and typewriting are taught. Shoe-making and dress-making schools were established in Erivan in 1922; a school of bookbinding was established in Leninakan in 1923, and a central trade school in Erivan in June of 1923.

7. **Agricultural Schools.**—Agriculture is the chief occupation of the present population of Armenia. This explains the great emphasis upon agricultural education.[1] The purpose of these schools is not to prepare highly advanced specialists, but simply to train better qualified farmers. It is expected that the graduate of these schools will be familiar with the use of new and improved farming machinery, and the modern ideas in regard to the selection of better seeds and stock, etc. The immediate purpose is to prepare farmers to improve both the quality and the quantity of their products.

There are agricultural schools of seven years established in suitable locations. The state university also has a strong department in agricultural science.

8. **Art Schools.**—The Armenian people, in general, have shown great love for the cultivation of art.

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 3, 1927, p. 6.

Especially have they shown marked talent in architecture, music, and poetry. The leaders in present-day education are emphasizing art education. Three types of art schools are established.

a. **Conservatory of Music.**—This was established in 1921, December 22. The purpose of this institution is to prepare: 1—musical technicians of mediocre talent, to fill various places in the musical institutions; 2—musical artists of high class talent and genius. "The Conservatory of Music is not an institution isolated from life."[1] Frequently musical programs are given for the benefit of the common people. In 1924-1925 there were 205 students attending this institution, with 23 teachers.

b. **Studio of Classical Dancing.**—The purpose of this institution is to study the origin and development of the Armenian folk dances, to restore the art of folk dancing, and, if necessary, to improve and modify it.

c. **Professional School of General Arts.**—This was founded in 1921, with the purpose of preparing qualified specialists in artistic productions, as well as training teachers of painting and drawing for public schools. It has departments of painting and sculpturing. There are also attached to this institution training schools of artistic embroidery and jewelry.

9. **Adult Schools.**—Since 70 per cent of the rural population can neither read nor write, the need of adult education is obvious. In 1921 the first decree was proclaimed by the government requiring that people between the ages of sixteen and thirty should learn to read and write. In 1921-1922 special institutions

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[1] Cf. Khorhertayin Hayasdan, p. 303. Translated by the author.

(Liggayan) were established for this purpose. In 1925 a society called the **Down With Illiteracy Society** was organized to assist the government in relieving the situation of illiteracy. In 1923-1924 a new type of school was established for adult workers and peasants with the curriculum of the seven year schools. In 1926-1927 evening courses and peripatetic schools were organized.

The government expects to have 564 special schools for illiterates and half-literates in 1928-1929. In 1927 the number of such schools was 437. This school system will consist of one year, six year, and four year schools.

Other forces and agencies are cooperating with the government in the campaign versus illiteracy. Among these, the village reading rooms (or cottage reading rooms) are the most important. The village reading room is an institution of learning rather than a library. Special lectures are given in these reading rooms. Special clubs are also organized in the reading room with the purpose of helping to eliminate illiteracy in Armenia.

In 1926-1927 there were 186 such clubs in the reading rooms. Courses in agriculture, physical sciences, military training, and public reading were organized in these reading rooms.

10. **Workers' Universities.**—These institutions[1] were organized in 1923 in Erivan and Leninakan. In 1925-1926 there were in the school at Erivan 370 pupils, and in Leninakan 365. The purpose of these institu-

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[1] Cf. The Popular Illumination, The Requirements for Admission, No. 2, 1926, pp. 70-74.

tions with pretentious name is to prepare in three or four years' time, workers and peasants of high intelligence for admission to the state university, where they are expected to take special courses in **Hasarakidoutiun,** the subject of general culture in history, the humanities, and institutional life of the country. These specialists are expected to take a leading part in the political reorganization of the Republic. In these workers' universities, technical industrial training is also given, together with the general cultural studies.

11. **The State University.**—To crown the public educational system of the Republic of Armenia, the state university was organized on January 21, 1921, in Erivan, capital of Armenia.

The university has the following departments (faculties):

1. Agriculture
2. Technology
3. Medicine
4. Humanities
    - A. History and Literature
    - B. Law
    - C. Pedagogy
        - a. Physiological-mathematical pedagogy
        - b. Biological
        - c. Historical-literary

The state university is an institution of high scholastic standing. The members of the faculty are a select group, thoroughly trained. The majority of them are educated in the universities of Germany, Switzerland, and Russia. The department of pedagogy especially is very strong. It has a pedagogical museum, representing the pedagogical and scientific activities of the Armenian schools. In 1927-1928, 104,313 people visited this museum.

[1]In 1927-1928 the state university had 1,324 students, in the following departments: Agriculture, 266; History, 148; Biology, 92; Physics and Mathematics, 57; Sociology and Economics, 273; Medicine, 251; Technology, 237.

Eight hundred fifty-seven of the total number of students were male; 467 female.

In 1926-1927 the university employed 117 teachers, of whom 10 were professors; 7 assistant professors; 7 laboratory assistants, and the remainder instructors.

II. **Statistical Information.**—A statistical[2] survey of the Armenian schools was made in 1927.

Elementary and Secondary Education.—There were 739 schools of the first degree (four year schools); 26 seven year schools; 2 nine year schools; with an attendance of 72,068 pupils, of whom 14,430 live in cities, 3,193 in towns, the remainder in villages.

Secondary Education.—As was mentioned above, there were 26 seven year schools; 2 nine year schools; 7 schools of second rank; and 30 schools for the youth of rural districts, with a total of 9,633 school population, of whom 6,424 live in 7 cities, 1,482 reside in towns, and the remainder in villages.

A total of 2,543 teachers are employed in both the elementary and secondary schools.

The following table[3] shows the gradual development of public education in the Republic of Armenia:

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[1] Cf. Baikar, Vol. VI, No. 84, April 10, 1928.

[2] This latest statistical data, in Baikar, Vol. VI, No. 98, April 26, 1928.

[3] Cf. The Popular Illumination, No. 11, p. 34.

Year	Schools of First Degree			Seven Year Schools			Rural Schools			Schools of Second Degree		
	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Schools	Teachers	Pupils
1921-22	492	1,501	45,815							13	137	1,647
1922-23	547	1,631	46,509							10	69	1,316
1923-24	614	1,342	51,248	16	146	4,913				10	62	2,047
1924-25	688	1,583	58,611	36	353	10,632				9	66	1,997
1925-26	704	1,647	62,370	40	429	12,549	6	16	225	8	140	2,196
1926-27	693	1,763	61,905	35	538	12,555	18		1,015	8	134	2,441

The Administrative Plan[1] of the public schools is graphically presented in the following diagram:

I 1921—TYPES OF SCHOOLS

Kindergarten			Schools of the First Degree						Schools of the Second Degree			
a	b	c	1	2	3	4	5	6	I	II	III	IV
			a,b,c class									

II 1923-24—TYPES OF SCHOOLS

Kindergarten			Schools of the First Degree (lower)							Schools of the Second Degree (upper)	
a	b	c	Seven Year School								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
							I	II	III	IV	V

Liquidation of Illiteracy[2].—There were 325 Liggayan for the liquidation of illiteracy, with 9,834 pupils; 118 schools for half-literates, with 3,547 pupils; 3 workers' evening courses, with 715 pupils; 4 higher schools, with 941 pupils; 4 schools of the first degree for party organization, with 173 pupils, and 1 elementary party school, with 73 pupils; 156 schools of political science, with 4,547 pupils; 24 peripatetic schools with 879 pupils; 138 libraries (the libraries of Erivan and Etchmiadzin are not included in these) with 15,187 readers; 42 clubs with 6,562 members; and 167 village reading rooms (cottage reading rooms).

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[1] Cf. Khorhertayin Hayasdan, p. 292.

[2] Cf. Baikar, Vol. VI, 1928, April 26.

The Miasnikian Public Library of Erivan contains 200,000 volumes, and employs 16 people. The State Library of Etchmiadzin has 7,000 valuable old manuscripts, 30,000 printed books, and employs four people.

III. The Curriculum of the Public School.—It is interesting to note the subjects of study included in the curriculum of these new type schools.

Program of Studies of the City Schools of the First Degree (lower) in 1926-27

Subjects	**Hours Per Week**				**Remarks**
	I	II	III	IV	
1. Armenian	24	24	20	20	Class in charge of one teacher
2. Hasarakidoutiun (Social Sciences)					
3. Physics					
4. Mathematics					
5. Art			4	4	Departmental System
6. Russian language			4	4	

Program of the Schools of the Second Degree (upper) in 1926-27 (emphasizing Pedagogy)

Subjects	I	II	III	IV	V	Remarks
I.—Biological Cycle						
1. Physiology	4					
2. Biology		3	3	2		
3. Hygiene				1	2	
II.—Physico-Mathematical Cycle						
4. Physics	3	3	3	3	2	
5. Chemistry		2	3	2		
6. Geology and Physiography		2	1			
7. Mathematics	5	4	4	4	3	
III.—Hasarakidoutiun (Social Science)						
8. Armenian language and literature	5	5	5	4	4	
9. Russian language and literature	5	5	5	4	4	
10. Hasarakidoutiun 11. General History 12. History of Labor	4	4	4	4	4	
13. Soviet Law and Reconstruction					1	
14. General Geography	2	2				
15. Economic Geography			2	2		
16. Arts	2	2	2			
17. Pedagogy				5	12	In the IV class, 160 hours; in V, 400 hours.
a. Economic, political, cultural, and educational conditions of Armenia				20		In summer schools, village reading rooms, in village community centers, and in other cultural establishments.
b. The study of the first degree school program				30		
c. Methods of work in school				50	100	
d. Productive labor				60	90	
e. Materialistic labor					60	
f. Introduction to child study					60	
g. School administration					30	
h. The system of Soviet education					30	
i. The fundamentals of Soviet labor					30	
Total	30	32	32	33	32	

Program of the Schools of the Second Degree (upper), (with emphasis on co-operative work)

Subjects	Hours Per Week I	II	III	IV	V	Remarks
I.—Biological Cycle						
1. Physiology	4					
2. Biology		3	3	2		
3. Hygiene					2	
II.—Physico-Mathematical Cycle						
4. Physics	3	3	3	3	2	
5. Chemistry		2	3	2		
6. Geology and Physiography			2	1		
7. Mathematics	5	4	4	4	3	
III.—Cycle of Hasarkidoutiun (Social Sciences)						
8. Armenian Language and Literature	5	5	5	4	4	
9. Russian Language and Literature	5	5	5	4	4	
10. Hasarakidoutiun (Social Sciences)						
11. General History	4	4	4	4	4	
12. History of Labor						
13 Soviet Law and Reconstruction					1	
14. General Geography	2	2				
15. Economic Geography			2	2		
16. Arts	2	2	2			
17. Economics				2		
18. Fundamentals of Co-operation				2		
19. Organization and Application of Co-operation of Consumption and Co-operation of Agriculture					2	
20. General Accounting				2	2	
21. Co-operative Accounting					2	
22. Commercial Arithmetic					1	
23. Commercial Correspondence					1	
24. Science of Products and the Materials of Commerce				1	1	
25. Practice				2	3	During summ'r
Total	30	32	32	34	32	

IV. Cultural Missionizing Among the Neighboring Illiterate Races.—The Armenian people throughout their history, especially during the Golden Age, have endeavored to leaven the neighboring illiterate races with the ideas and ideals of Western culture. Just as Sahak and Mesrop sent educational missionaries among the races of the Caucasus in the Golden Age, so the present rulers of Armenia are endeavoring to spread the light of civilization among the backward races, within the confines of Armenia as well as in the neighboring localities. A special committee has since 1926 been working on the problem of inventing an alphabet for various illiterate races. Up to now, alphabets have been invented for the "Tanagan, Touvinigan, Kurinagan, Lezkiagan, and Daghsdanian" languages. Furthermore, textbooks and dictionaries have been prepared for the following languages: "Avareren, Moldaveren, Talisheren, Turkish, Uzbekeren, Turkmeneren, Cherkeseren, and Kabardineren."

Besides these cultural efforts, the government is devoting much attention to the promotion of education among subject races within the confines of the Republic. A liberal and sympathetic policy is followed in this regard, free from chauvinism, and racial and religious discrimination.

In concluding we remark that the educational movement in Armenia is just beginning to gain momentum as a result of seven years of peaceful policy under the new regime.

In our next chapter we shall give a very brief summary of our findings.

CHAPTER XXI

Summary

A glance over the pages of this study on the History of education in Armenia will doubtless reveal many interesting facts. It is fitting to give a very brief summary of the most outstanding and essential ones.

(1) One of the most outstanding facts is that Armenian education was founded with the introduction of Christianity as a state religion in Armenia A. D. 301, by Gregory the Illuminator and King Tiridates. The former, educated in Caesarea, resorted to education as an effective means to evangelize Armenia. In this campaign for popular education the Christian church provided the spiritual leadership and the King's treasury furnished the financial support. However, owing to adverse political conditions, the Armenian state did not enjoy a permanent independent life, therefor the responsibility of educating the youth of the nation fell upon the shoulders of the church. The church was able to educate only a limited number of people for leadership. Although, in addition, private tutors flourished in every town, the major portion of the nation was deprived of the benefits of an education. It was only after the middle of the nineteenth century that popular education began to gain a firm foothold in Armenia, though at different periods attempts were made to establish schools for the children of common folk.

The educational program of Gregory the Illuminator was not native; it was international in character, the teachers were of foreign origin, the chief textbook was the Bible, which at this period was not translated into Armenian, but was read in Greek and Syrian. Armenia as yet lacked an alphabet of her own.

(2) The second attempt to revive public education was during the fifth century, by three men: Katholikos Sahak, King Vramshabooh, and Mesrop, "the first educator" of Armenia, who invented the Armenian alphabet. This invention, as well as the translation of the Scriptures and other texts of the Church Fathers, inaugurated a period of intense activity in literature, in education, and in evangelization. A central school was established at the capital, Vagharshabad, for the leaders, and a series of schools were founded throughout Armenia for the common folk. Mesrop, the leader of this educational movement, personally toured the country, as well as foreign countries. He also invented alphabets for neighboring nations, Georgians, Albanians of Caucasus, and extended his educational activity in Georgia and Albania as well.

The Golden Age of Armenian Culture was brought about through the activities of Mesrop and Sahak. Their disciples, educated at Alexandria, Byzantium, and Athens, continued the creative work, but political upheavals put an end to this cultural development. Henceforth, the Church instead of the State, took upon itself the education of the Armenian youth. Through the Church and its schools, the Armenian nation preserved her national culture and her identity. The Armenian education thereafter became national in character and Christian in spirit.

(3) Hellenism in Armenia was held in high

esteem by the educational leaders. Armenian literature and education were invigorated by the assimilation of Hellenic culture. Armenia produced a few outstanding Hellenists, among them David the Invincible, the Armenian philosopher of the fifth century was the most prominent. He belonged to the second generation of Armenian students of Sahak-Mesropian school. He was chiefly a product of the Alexandrian school, translated some of the works of Aristotle,—Categories— wrote the **Definitions of Philosophy** to refute the doctrines of Pyrrho. His translations of the **Interpretations of Porphyry** have served as a source "to delineate precisely the true character of an original copy of this work," as Conybeare states. All these books were used as textbooks in the schools of Armenia during the Middle Ages.

Although Hellenism after the council of Chalcedon (A. D. 451) received a setback in Armenia, owing to the breach between the Armenian and Greek churches, it did not die out entirely. The Armenian Sunyatz school during the succeeding centuries kept high the torch of Hellenism and in the Middle Ages, and even after, representatives of Hellenism flourished in Armenia. Armenian Church, in this regard, similar to the Assyrian church, did not persecute severely its clergy for studying Hellenic works. For this reason, Hellenism was not stamped out of the Armenian educational circles.

(4) During the Middle Ages Armenian monasteries kept the torch of civilization burning. Some of these institutions of learning during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries attained a high standing and

served as centers of higher education for the Armenian youth. Some of them were called "universities" in the medieval sense of the term.

(5) From A. D. 632 or 642-839 Arabs ruled Armenia and during the Armenian Pagratid dynasty of A. D. 861-1079 Arabic political influence was supreme in Armenia. Nowithstanding the advanced culture of the Arabs and the close contact between the two nations, Armenia stood aloof from Arabic culture in general. The differences of religion and race were the actual causes of this situation. However, upon poetry and arts, architecture—as well as to some extent upon the development of medieval Armenian language—Arabs exercised a certain degree of influence.

(6) The crusades and the development of commerce had a direct influence on the revival of Armenian education during the twelfth century. On the whole during the reign of Armenian Rupinian dynasty in Cilicia (A. D. 1080-1393) Armenians came in closer contact with Europe through their assistance to the Crusaders. Latin and French influences were felt in all phases of Armenian life in Cilicia. Thus the Armenian education received a new impetus. Monastic education was the prevailing type of education, while for foreigners there were private schools in which Latin, old French and Italian were taught. Twelfth century is marked off as the period of Lesser Renaissance in Armenia. Nerses the Gracious, Nerses of Lampron and Mechitar Kosh were great leaders living at this age.

(7) The darkest age of Armenian education embraces the period beginning near the end of the fifteenth century and ending in the first half of the sev-

enteenth. This was due to political upheavals. During the thirteenth century Tartars and Mongols invaded Armenia; during the fourteenth century Timour laid waste the whole length of Asia Minor; during the fifteenth century Turks increased their warlike activities; and during the sixteenth century Armenia completely succumbed to the onslaughts of the Turks. The educational, religious and cultural endeavors came to a standstill in Armenia. However, the Armenian settlements in Europe began a movement towards awakening beginning with the sixteenth century. Inaugurated in the Armenian colonies, printing began to flourish not only in these settlements but in Armenia as well.

(8) Some of the factors which brought about the revival of modern Armenian education were: the Latin missionaries during the seventeenth century; the Mechitarist congregation of Venice founded in 1717; the American missionary activity during the nineteenth century; and Armenian students educated in Europe and America, and the initiative and yearning of a few native leaders for awakening. The Latin missionary influences were limited so far as educational activities were concerned. Indirectly they influenced the opposition group among the Armenians to educational endeavor. But the influence of the American missionary activity was direct. Elementary and higher education was spread through them in the remotest sections of the Armenian provinces.

(9) The Armenians living in the Caucasus region in Russia through their contact with Germany, Switzerland, and Russia adopted progressive educational ideals and methods long before their brethren in Turkey; but

popular education was more extensive among the Armenians in Turkey, owing to the stimulus of the American Missionary activities as well as to the native educational societies.

(10) Armenian population of Turkey, which was about two million souls before the World War, and about one million of which were exterminated by the Turks, is now concentrated in greater part in the Republic of Armenia, in Europe, Syria, and Palestine. The chief educational problem of this group of Armenians has been the training of orphans. In the support and training of these orphans the American Committee of the Near East Relief rendered a marvelous piece ot service.

(11) In the Republic of Armenia, which was founded after the World War, at present the most progressive methods of public education are being tried with a determination to stamp out illiteracy. The Armenian people living in the confines of this Republic are resorting to education as the most potent factor in the regeneration of the race. In short, the political, cultural, and educational activities of the Armenian people are now centered in the Republic of Armenia. A genuine effort for public education is being made in this homeland of Armenian people since 1920 and so far a remarkable success has been achieved.

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